PURPOSE OF THE WRITTEN PROGRAM
The purpose of this written program is for University facilities used by large groups to comply with all local regulatory requirements (New York City Department of Buildings and the New York City Fire Department) for Places of Assembly.

SCOPE OF THIS WRITTEN PROGRAM
This policy applies to all New York University academic, commercial and residential facilities with auditoriums, screening rooms, theaters and large facilities with Place of Assembly permits used for groups over 74 persons for other than classroom purposes. All places of assembly may only be used in accordance with the use cited on the Department of Buildings (DOB) Certificate of Operation and arranged in accordance with DOB approved floor plan(s). The facility manager shall maintain a copy of the approved floor plan(s) on premises for presentation the the fire department and to ensure that the space is maintained in an approved manner.

WHO NEEDS TO KNOW THIS WRITTEN PROGRAM
All New York University academic, commercial and residential facilities.

PROCEDURES FOR IMPLEMENTATION
Responsibilities:

Department of Environmental Health and Safety
EHS will transmit the necessary information to the responsible parties to insure that the University personnel are knowledgeable regarding regulatory requirements.

Code Compliance will obtain the necessary Place of Assembly permit from the Department of Buildings.

Directors or Department Chairs
The Dean/Vice President or their designated representative in charge of the auditoriums, screening rooms, or theaters will insure the areas of assembly comply with all regulatory requirements when the facilities are in use. The theater or production manager of the each individual space will insure all personnel have the New York City Fire Department required certificates of fitness as Fire Guards "Indoor Place of Assembly Safety Personnel.", and be familiar with the operation of the theater fire alarm system. The manager will insure the daily inspection as outlined in section 6 of this policy is performed.

Facilities Manager, Department Manager, Construction Manager and Supervisors
Facility Maintenance and Operations will maintain fire alarm and fire suppression systems, emergency lighting, and DOB certificate of operation, Fire Department public assembly permits and occupancy load signage are current & posted. Code Compliance will obtain the necessary Place of Assembly permit from the Department of Buildings.
Maintenance and Housekeeping Personnel
Ensure that all housekeeping and maintenance materials are stored properly and that aisles, exits, fire protection equipment and signage are not obstructed.

WRITTEN PROGRAM DEFINITIONS

Place of Assembly (Assembly Group A.) - Assembly Group A occupancy includes, among others, the use of a building or structure or a portion thereof, excluding a dwelling unit, for the gathering of any number of persons for purposes such as civic, social or religious functions, recreation, food or drink consumption, awaiting transportation, or similar group activities; or when occupied by 75 persons or more for educational or instructional purposes.

House Manager - An NYU employee responsible for the overall management of a performance or event.

Place of assembly safety personnel - individuals that are responsible to assist in maintaining fire safety in indoor and outdoor places of assembly and public gathering events.

UNIVERSITY WRITTEN PROGRAM

General Life Safety
1. No fire protection or life safety features are to be tampered with or disabled.
2. Scenery shall not obstruct or interfere with egress aisles, egress lighting or fire protection equipment.
3. Personal protective equipment shall be used during setup (i.e., safety shoes, eye protection, etc.).
4. Scenery shall be engineered, constructed and installed (and adequately secured) to provide for the safety of the cast, crew and audience.

Fire Prevention
1. No flammable items are permitted. All combustible materials including decorations and fabrics shall be flameproofed. This will be accomplished either by being treated with flame retardant that has a Certificate of Approval from the NYC Fire Department and is applied by an individual with the requisite Certificate of Fitness; or manufactured with flameproofing and has an approval from the NYC Fire Department.
2. All scenery shall be constructed of treated fire retardant lumber. Where treated wood cannot be used, the final product shall be treated using an approved fire retardant material in accordance with New York City regulatory requirements. The application of the fire retardant treatment shall be performed by an individual with the required Certificate of Fitness issued by the New York City Fire Department.
3. Use of an open flame during a production requires a permit issued by the New York City Fire Department. The end user will obtain the permit.

Lighting
1. Lighting equipment and other rigging over the audience seating area is discouraged.
2. Lighting equipment or rigging shall not be affixed to sprinkler piping.
3. No cables or equipment may run through or across aisles or exit paths.

4. All lighting equipment must have a safety wire secured through the yoke to the supporting structure.

5. Lighting fixtures without lenses shall have a safety screen secured in front of the exposed lamp.

6. All top-heavy lighting towers shall be secured at the top (by securing to the overhead grid or a permanent overhead fixture) and secured or weighted at the bottom.

**Seating**

1. The Occupant Load may not exceed the capacity limits of the Permit of Assembly for the space.

2. For movable seating:

3. All aisles shall be 44” wide and lead to a cross aisle that leads directly to an exit.

4. No dead end aisles shall exceed 20’ in length, from seat to a cross aisle or exit.

5. Rows of seats, opening onto an aisle at one end shall have no more than seven (7) seats. Rows of seats opening onto an aisle at both ends shall have no more than fourteen (14) seats.

6. Seats shall be spaced with a minimum of 12" from the back of one row to the front of the next.

7. All chairs must be fastened together into rows. There shall be no makeshift or bleacher seating.

**Supervision During Performances**

1. Each auditorium, screening room, or theater shall have a House Manager (an NYU employee) present at all times during a performance.

2. The House Manager must know the location of all exits and the nearest Fire Alarm Pull Station and Phone.

3. The House Manager must be a certified as a Fire Guard “Indoor Place of Assembly Safety Personnel.”, by the New York City Fire Department.

4. There shall be one certified “Indoor Place of Assembly Safety Personnel.”, Fire Guards for every 100 people of occupancy.

5. “Indoor Place of Assembly Safety Personnel.”, Fire Guards shall maintain current certification from the New York City Fire Department.

6. The end user and Public Safety will provide “Indoor Place of Assembly Safety Personnel.”, Fire Safety Guards with training on their expected responsibilities during and after performances.

7. When a theater is used as a classroom fireguards are not required. At the beginning of the semester, a brief fire evacuation plan is to be provided to the class.
The House Manager shall ensure that adequate place of assembly safety personnel possessing a NYC Fire Department issued certificate of fitness are provided.

**Special Fire Safety Precautions for Theaters**

Safety personnel are required for performing arts, motion picture theaters or other similar indoor public gatherings. Regular inspections required for theaters. Every theater admitting an audience, shall be periodically inspected for fire safety in compliance with the Fire Department requirements.

**Daily inspections.**

The responsible person must conduct the daily inspections in a performing arts or motion picture theater on any day on which the facility is to be used and occupied for a performance or other audience event. Such inspections may be performed by you, your supervisor or other responsible person and the inspections shall verify compliance with the following requirements:

1. Means of egress, including exit access, exits and exit discharges, shall be inspected daily to ensure that they are unobstructed, that there are no impediments to their immediate use and that door hardware and other devices and components are in good working order.

2. Automatic fire doors shall be inspected to ensure that there are no obstructions to their closing, or otherwise rendered inoperable.

3. Standpipe and sprinkler systems, including fire pumps and water storage tanks, shall be inspected to ensure they are in good working order.

4. Portable fire extinguishers shall be inspected to ensure that they are readily available for use as required by Fire Code.

5. If special effects are to be used during the performance, all of the conditions of the permit, including, where applicable, a fire watch and/or additional portable fire extinguishers, are in place.

6. Manual fire alarm boxes located on the stage of performing arts theaters shall be tested by activating the alarm. Prior notification shall be made to the central station monitoring the fire alarm system.

7. The means by which skylights and other stage smoke vents may be manually activated are fully operational and/or readily available.

8. All areas of the theater, including the backstage, under the stage, and outdoor areas near the fresh air intakes for the building’s ventilation system, shall be inspected to ensure that there is no accumulation of rubbish or other combustible waste that, if ignited, could cause a fire or smoke condition.

9. Note the location of street fire alarm box nearest to stage door for immediate transmission of alarms of fire.

The acronym **ESCAPE** may be used as a reminder for doing the pre-event inspection:

E - Exits – All exits are unblocked, unlocked, and properly marked

S - Storage – The occupancy is clean, orderly and there is no excessive storage. No storage of combustible material and combustible waste in corridors. The hazardous materials are stored, handled or used only in the designated areas and are away from any ignition sources.
C - Capacity – The number of persons occupying the building or space does not exceed the posted capacity. Capacity certificates are properly posted.

A - Aisles – All aisles are free and clear at all times.

P - Protection – Smoke, fire alarm, sprinkler systems, and fire extinguishers are in proper working order and have up-to-date inspection and testing performed.

E - Emergency exit lighting – All exits signs and emergency exit lighting are working properly.

**Emergency Procedures**

The safety personnel must have a method of communicating to the emergency services. The building owner or the designated person should provide a communication method for the safety personnel to notify FDNY in case of fire or other types of emergency. Notifying by phone is the most direct and effective way to notify the Fire Department. The safety personnel must also sound the fire alarm pull station when available. Activating the pull station is the most effective way to notify the building occupants in case of a fire emergency.

**RELATED POLICIES**

NYU Environmental Health and Safety Policy
NYU Fire and Life Safety Policy

**RELEVANT RESOURCES**

NYC Building Code
NYC Fire Code