

## **PENTACLE THEATRE “CASTING BEST PRACTICES”**

**Pentacle Theatre is dedicated to open communication and transparency with our patrons, volunteers and communities. This “casting best practices” document will be posted online, made available during auditions, and shared periodically in e-news and other communications. The document will be revisited and updated as needed.**

### **Overview/goals**

- The best interests of the theater and production should guide every casting decision.
- Auditions and casting should be both transparent and inclusive, with newcomers and Pentacle Theatre veterans welcome.
- Directors and their production team should convey respect and appreciation for each person who auditions. This includes notifying actors (both those who are cast and those who are not) about results in a timely manner. This also includes encouraging actors who are not cast to contact the director and ask for feedback about their audition.

### **Pre-casting**

- In general, pre-casting should be avoided; the goal is to embrace an open audition process.
- As outlined in the director’s handbook, the board must approve any pre-casting.
- Board liaisons should remind directors during or prior to auditions about the process for pre-casting.
- If certain roles are pre-cast, the director must identify those roles in audition announcements. Announcements about roles that have been pre-cast also will be included in Pentacle Theatre communications, e.g., on the website, e-news, etc.

### **Nepotism**

- Nepotism is defined as casting an immediate family member (spouse/partner, child, sibling or parent) or close friend.
- In service to the theater’s commitment to open and fair auditions and to community perception, nepotism in casting should be considered carefully.
- Casting family members or close friends should occur only if the family member auditions, meets casting requirements, is judged without personal bias, and is the best person for the role. Directors should carefully make these decisions, balancing what is best for the show with public perception about favoritism/nepotism.
- Board liaisons should remind directors during or prior to auditions about the theater’s casting best practices as related to nepotism.
- If a director feels he/she needs to cast a family member or close friend, he/she should discuss this with the show’s board liaison prior to making a final casting decision.

### **Production team**

- Director should make careful consideration when casting a member of the production team. Factors to consider when casting a member of the production team include:
  - No other actors auditioned for the role, and/or the production member is capable and willing to fill the role.
  - Director should announce at the beginning of auditions that a production team member is auditioning and that he/she will not be shown any favoritism.
  - Production duties (e.g., choreography, music/vocal direction, etc.) for that particular show are within the scope of what can be accomplished successfully when the production person also is fulfilling on-stage duties.
  - An emergency situation (illness, actor leaves the show suddenly, etc.) occurs and the director has explored all other options for a casting substitution.

### **Casting changes**

- Directors should follow the protocol for cast changes as outlined in the director's handbook.

### **Diversity in casting**

- Directors always should strive to make culturally appropriate casting decisions with a strong commitment to inclusivity and diversity (race, ethnicity, gender, etc.).

### **Workshops “pay to play”**

- When workshops affiliated Pentacle Theatre are offered, participants in those workshops will be afforded equal casting consideration as those who do not attend the workshops, i.e., there will be no “pay-to-play” favoritism given to workshop attendees.

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