

1. ORGANIZATION AND STRUCTURE

Who We Are

Welcome to the Lesbian/Gay Chorus of San Francisco. We are an autonomous musical organization incorporated in the State of California with a nonprofit 501(c)3 status. This means the Chorus is eligible for tax deductible donations. The membership is more than what the name implies - a group of lesbians, gay men, heterosexual men and women, bisexuals, trisexuals, transgender men and women, asexual beings, and everyone in between who have joined to sing music written for soprano, alto, tenor and bass. The membership is open to anyone and we will not discriminate on the basis of sexual orientation, ethnic origin, disability, or any other human difference. We also encourage the participation of non-singing members. Hereinafter, the Lesbian/Gay Chorus of San Francisco will be referred to as “LGCSF” or “the Chorus.”

Mission Statement

Everybody Matters! Reflecting the gender and sexual diversity of our city, the Lesbian/Gay Chorus of San Francisco educates and inspires the greater community to live authentically through music and laughter.

Vision Statement

LGCSF demonstrates its commitment to

- Authenticity
- Musical Excellence
- Social Harmony
- Community Service
- Inclusion and Accessibility
- Laughter

by producing and performing music of various genres at paid concerts and free outreach events.

Organization & Structure

The Lesbian/Gay Chorus of San Francisco is a registered 501(c)3 non-profit corporation. As such, our organization is responsible to the laws and ordinances of the State of California. More details regarding our corporate status are in our Bylaws.

2. GUIDELINES FOR MEMBERSHIP

Membership Status

Wide participation is necessary in order to insure a diversity of views, and members are encouraged to volunteer additional time to the Chorus. Membership is not limited to singing members. Non-singing membership is encouraged and provides support to staff and production personnel. “Members” are participants in the chorus who pay monthly dues as set forth by the Board of Directors.

All organizational meetings and rehearsals are open to every member of the Chorus.

Attendance

Missing rehearsals can create serious musical and morale problems. To prevent this, the following attendance policies have been instituted:

- Members are required to attend all regular Thursday rehearsals, which start promptly at 7:00 PM. Rehearsals run until 10:00 PM.
- Members who miss rehearsals during a concert period (i.e. the time between concerts, typically about three months, during which a set of musical repertoire is rehearsed) may be required to be musically evaluated by the Artistic Director. The Artistic Director will then either approve them to sing in the specific concert or suspend them for that concert. When possible, additional musical help will be provided by Section Leaders or Artistic Director.
- Members are expected to attend sectional rehearsals.
- Attendance at technical and dress rehearsals is required. Whenever possible, these will be scheduled during regular Thursday night rehearsals.
- Members should attend retreats to the extent possible.
- Absences from rehearsals must be reported in advance to the Artistic Director. The Artistic Director will let Section Leaders know who has called in each week.
- Leaves of absence from time to time are necessary for members of the Chorus. Flexibility will be shown in appreciation of the circumstances involved. A member who needs to take a leave must inform the Artistic Director or Chorus Manager prior to the leave. A leave of absence will not deprive a person of membership in the Chorus. If you return as an active member near a performance date, you may sing at the discretion of the Artistic Director.
- Members on leave will remain on the roster as long as dues are kept current. A leave of absence may be taken for one concert period at a time (approximately three months). At the end of said concert period, if member does not return as an active, dues paying member, she/he will be considered an alumnus of the Chorus and will be removed from the active member roster.

Chorus Dues Information

All new and returning members are asked to pay a music fee of \$30 per year. This will be due by October 1st, so you have the rest of August and all of September to pay it. Chorus members joining in the Spring will be asked to pay an appropriate pro-rate music fee.

A quick overview of the dues plan options for everyone:

Plan A- I do NOT wish to serve on a committee and will pay \$40 a months for 12 months.

Plan A+- I do NOT wish to serve on a committee, I DO wish to save \$40, and will pay \$440 before 10/1/2013 for the whole year.

Plan B- I DO wish to serve on a committee, and will pay \$30 a month for 12 months.

Plan B+- I DO wish to serve on a committee, I DO wish to save \$30, and will pay \$330 before 10/1/2013 for the whole year.

Automatic Payment:

If you want to pay month to month, and want to set up auto pay, all you need to do is contact your bank and tell them you want a check in the amount of \$30/\$40 made payable to Lesbian/Gay Chorus of

San Francisco mailed to 584 Castro Street #486 San Francisco, CA 94114. It does not matter what date it is sent, as long as it's within the month you're paying dues for.

LGCSF does offer scholarship opportunities, so if you have financial need please contact the Chorus Manager (manager@lgcsf.org) for application materials and additional information.

Communications

This section deals with the means and processes the Chorus uses to communicate with its membership. In an organization of our size, it is important to remind ourselves that each individual must take it upon themselves to keep current with developments. In addition, the chorus has adopted the following community norms to improve communication. These norms are helpful during rehearsal, during our organizational meetings, and during online communications.

- Find Focus
- Step Up, Step Back
- Have an attitude of gratitude
- Speak from the "I" perspective
- Don't Yuck My Yum
- Practice Empathetic Listening

Leadsheet

The Leadsheet is a weekly bulletin provided to facilitate communication. Its primary purpose is to inform members of upcoming events and other announcements of Chorus business. Members wanting to make announcements to the Chorus of a personal nature (job opportunities, garage sales, help wanted, etc.) should give them to the Leadsheet Editor by 6:00 p.m. on Sundays so that a verbal announcement does not have to be made during the rehearsal.

Membership Roster

- Each Chorus member's name, address, home telephone number, email address, and business/cell telephone number appears in the roster. If a member so chooses, a note will be included regarding distribution of this information and/or accessibility of the numbers included.
- Updated information is given to the Chorus Manager for a roster update. Changes of information are to be sent by email to the Chorus Manager. The roster is updated and distributed as needed; occasionally, the Chorus Manager may email a change to members prior to a new roster being distributed.
- Names appear in all Chorus programs as printed in the roster.
- The roster is distributed to the members for the purpose of internal communication and for the exclusive use of LGCSF business. It is not loaned, rented, or sold for any reason.

Note: As a California corporation, our roster and all names and the data included therein will constitute the legal membership of the Chorus for the purpose of determining quorum count for meetings and who may or may not vote at those meetings.

Email List

The Members@lgcsf.org is a moderated email list that contains all active chorus members, staff,

and board members. The list serves as the vehicle for delivery of the chorus lead sheet. In addition, the Chorus Director and Manager may use the email list for important chorus announcements. Other chorus members – for example, members of the board of directors and committee chairs – may be given access to post messages directly to this list. It is important to limit the messages that are sent to this list in order to maintain the expectation that messages sent to the list are important and should be read by all members.

Other communication channels

- LGCSF also maintains an email list called “chatter@lgcsf.org”. All members have the option to be on the list, but it is not required. Members may post messages to the list, understanding that some members may not see the messages.
- LGCSF maintains a Facebook “Group” that is intended to provide a communication channel among members of the chorus. Participation is voluntary.
- LGCSF maintains a Facebook “Page” that provides a venue for communication between the chorus and its friends and fans. Participation is voluntary.

Announcements

During rehearsal breaks there may be announcements that could not be posted in the Leadsheet. These announcements generally reflect the latest information available and are a key part of the day-to-day business of the Chorus. The following guidelines keep announcements a good use of chorus time:

- Announcements made at weekly rehearsals should be restricted to Chorus business.
- Avoid repeating any information already mentioned in the Leadsheet.
- Keep announcements brief and keep follow-up questions to a minimum.

General “Town Meeting” Forum

To encourage Chorus members to raise their concerns regarding matters of Chorus direction, policies and procedures and general musical and administrative issues, a “Town Meeting” will be scheduled annually at a convenient time and place with attendance by all Chorus members encouraged. Additional business meetings may be scheduled during regular rehearsal times as needed.

Musical Preparedness

Members of the Chorus are required to be musically prepared for all rehearsals and performances to which they have committed. This requires:

- Memorizing those portions of the musical repertoire assigned by the Artistic Director.
- Individually learning those parts of music that have not been mastered during rehearsal. (Use of recording devices and Chorus-provided rehearsal file is encouraged).

Members having trouble with their parts should speak to their Section Leader or the Artistic Director about receiving additional help.

Performance Schedule

The Chorus performs several times a year. Regular events include a Spring Concert, the Annual

Pride Concert, and a Fall Concert. Additional performances may be scheduled, including cabaret performances, community outreach or benefit projects, holiday events, and guest spots at performances hosted by other groups. If additional performances seem likely, the Artistic Director and/or Board of Directors will notify the Chorus as soon as possible.

Outreach Event Schedule

There will periodically be other performances that are often called “Outreach Events.” Most of these events will be presented to the membership to gauge the level of interest before a commitment is made. Certain commitments of people and hours are required for many of these events; all members are encouraged to participate as much as possible. For many of these events, friends, partners and family are welcome and encouraged to help.

Performance Protocol

In order to assure a successful concert, LGCSF has established the following protocol for members to observe.

Concert Etiquette

- **OBSERVE CALL TIMES** – Members should arrive 10-15 minutes early. Call time is set for when you are actually needed for vocal warm-up, notes or staging. Please prepare your attire, hair and make-up, and sort your music prior to arrival. Allow ample time for transit and parking.
- **BE CONSIDERATE OF OTHERS** – Wear clean and pressed clothes, use unscented deodorant and never use cologne or strongly scented soaps or hair sprays. Chorus members should always appear clean and well groomed.
- **GIVE THE PERSON IN CHARGE YOUR FULL ATTENTION** – It is your responsibility to keep quiet and follow directions. Whether it be the Artistic Director, the Stage Manager, the Lighting Designer, or the House Manager; listen attentively when directions are being given to save time and avoid confusion.
- **REMAIN QUIET IN THE BACKSTAGE AREA, ESPECIALLY WHEN WAITING FOR A CUE TO GO ON** – Even a whisper can travel and multiply. Also, noise can carry through doors and walls and disturb performers and the audience.
- **ONCE YOU ARE LINED UP AND READY TO GO ON, DON'T BREAK THE LINE FOR ANY REASON SHORT OF AN ACTUAL EMERGENCY!** – Entering and exiting from the stage should be done without excess activity in the wings.
- **NEVER APPLAUD A FELLOW PERFORMER WHILE ON-STAGE** – Only if an award or special recognition is being made to another person/performer is it appropriate to applaud.
- **THE AUDIENCE SHOULD NOT BE AWARE OF ANY PERFORMER WHO IS OFF-STAGE** – If you are in the wings and can see the audience, they can see you. Step back and out of sight. If you are on stage while another person or group is performing, remain still and quiet, and observe instructions as to where to stay.
- **PERFORMERS ARE NOT ALLOWED IN THE HOUSE ONCE IT IS OPENED TO THE AUDIENCE** – Performers should never appear in the audience when not on stage unless special seating arrangements have been made. In such cases, they must be as quiet as possible so as not to be noticed.
- **SEATS IN THE PERFORMANCE HALL MAY NOT BE SAVED UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCES** – Keep your belongings in the designated area, and do not “save” seats for

friends or family. If you have an audience member with special needs, please see the House Manager for any additional arrangements. In most cases, the Chorus Manager will serve as House Manager at concerts.

- GUESTS ARE NOT ALLOWED BACKSTAGE – Unless authorized by the Stage Manager.
- NO CELLPHONES, pagers, digital watches, or any audible electronic devices.

Stage Presence

- MOVE QUICKLY AND QUIETLY ON AND OFF STAGE – Don't run or crowd others. Arms should rest at your sides, and you should have a pleasant, relaxed smile. Please be aware that noise carries and step lightly while on-stage. Watch out for steps, risers, or decorations.
- WHILE ON-STAGE, THE CHORUS SHOULD APPEAR AS ONE ENSEMBLE – To achieve a uniform and professional look, closely follow all stage directions. Stay in the position you are assigned, move as quickly and smoothly as possible during transitions.
- WHILE ON-STAGE, FOCUS YOUR ATTENTION ON THE CONDUCTOR – Even when you're not singing; this includes solo portions of an all-Chorus number. This serves to focus, thus intensify the music performance.
- NO TALKING OR FIDGETING ON THE STAGE – Don't make comments to your neighbors during or between numbers (including whispering or any other interaction). Don't drink water, fix your clothing, your hair, your glasses, etc. It is distracting and draws attention to you as an individual!
- WHEN MUSIC IS USED IN A PERFORMANCE – Music folders should be held in the upstage (away from the audience) hand while walking on and off stage and are raised and lowered only at the Conductor's signal. If the music is memorized, hands should hang loosely at your sides unless otherwise directed. Remember to watch your posture; this can make a huge difference.
- DON'T BURY YOUR FACE IN THE MUSIC FOLDER – Your mouth is always pointed towards the audience (especially important to remember in songs with movement).
- RELAX! – Performer(s) attitude shall be appropriate to the music, though always positive and energetic.
- HAVE FUN! – You should be enjoying this and show it. If you make a mistake just smile and continue.
- DURING APPLAUSE, ATTENTION SHOULD BE DIRECTED TO THE AUDIENCE – A compliment extended should be gracefully acknowledged and accepted with a smile. Watch the Conductor for cues to close your folders, bow and exit. Maintain stage composure until you are off-stage and out of audience view.

Performer(s) Responsibilities

- HAVE THE PROPER COSTUME, MUSIC, PROPS, ETC. – Be sure you have every piece of your costume/props with you when you arrive at the performance space. Individuals are personally responsible for receiving and returning Chorus property. Be sure your name is on your music in pencil and inside your music folder.
- PERFORMERS' APPEARANCE – You will be asked to adjust your costume if it is not what it should be. The Artistic Director is responsible for establishing concert attire. Consistency is necessary and final authority as to the appropriateness of each singer's attire will rest with the Artistic Director, unless otherwise delegated. Jewelry should be subtle, non-reflective, and kept to a minimum.
- KEEP THE DRESSING ROOMS/BACKSTAGE AREA NEAT – Return all Chorus accessories and keep the counters clean. If you find something missing, contact the Chorus Manager; she/he will act as a "lost and found" if needed.

- LEAVE VALUABLES AT YOUR OWN RISK – Even when you know the area will be secured, be careful about what you leave backstage. When possible, Chorus volunteers will watch possessions during performances. Pay attention to the designated staging area for the Chorus and leave possessions there. LGCSF and the venues in which we perform are not responsible for lost or stolen articles.
- NO FOOD OR DRINKS ARE ALLOWED ON STAGE OR IN THE HOUSE – Generally food is allowed in the dressing rooms and lobby areas only. Do not bring or consume alcohol. Do bring water. Smoking is limited to the outdoors, and not advised during concert breaks or before performances.
- TICKET SALES – For most performances, the Chorus Manager will check tickets out to members to sell to friends, family and coworkers. If a Chorus member fails to return concert tickets by the required date, she/he will be responsible to the Chorus for the amount of the unsold tickets.

For the following sections, descriptions of committees, volunteer positions, and job roles, please refer to the long-form handbook.

2. GUIDELINES FOR MEMBERSHIP
 - Grounds for Denial/Cancellation of Scholarship
 - Resolution of Member Grievances
 - Disciplinary Procedures
 - Resignation/Termination of Membership
 - Care of Wardrobe
 - Rehearsal Protocol

3. COMMITTEES
 - Permanent Committees
 - Fundraising Committee
 - Membership Committee
 - Production Committee
 - Artistic Advisory Committee
 - PR/Marketing Committee
 - Ad-Hoc Committees
 - Search Committee
 - Pride & Pride Concert
 - GALA Festival
 - Task Forces

4. VOLUNTEER GUIDELINES
 - Possible Volunteer Positions
 - Board of Directors
 - Executive Committee
 - Board-Committee Liaisons
 - Section Leader
 - Leadsheet Editor
 - Historian
 - GALA Representative
 - Retreat Coordinator
 - Booth Captain
 - Production Chairperson

- Production Manager
- House Manager
- Stage Manager

Librarian

Personnel Coordinator

Webmaster

Volunteer Coordinator

Other Opportunities

Non-Singing Membership

Application Process

Selection Process

- Expectations

- Grievance Procedures

Resignation/Termination of Volunteers

5. JOB DESCRIPTIONS

Artistic Director

Chorus Manager

Accompanist/Pianist

Assistant Artistic Director