

Email to Chorus ICC Contacts – September 20, 2024, amended October 17, 2024 re photos

Hello, Chorus contact person as noted on your CIF for IC&C 2024 –

We're off to the races! We have all received lots of useful information from our convention manager, Allison Thompson, through Harmony, Inc. social media and email blasts. And the webpage is terrific! [Harmony, Incorporated - IC&C \(harmonyinc.org\)](http://harmonyinc.org) And this year, it includes an information page specifically for contestants, which includes many of the documents described below, and more. As ICJC, though, I have a few things to reiterate or to pass along to ensemble contacts about contest activities. And so...

To begin with, the **pattern schedule** for the chorus contest is on the website. [2024 Chorus Pattern Times](#)

The schedule for the entire weekend, also on the website, shows the **chorus stage viewing** on Wednesday, beginning at 5:00 and lasting for sixty minutes. We are very hopeful that we will be much more efficient than that. Here's how.

First, we are asking choruses to send no more than five people to the stage viewing time. Fewer than five is fine, too! With 24 choruses eager for first-hand information about the performance venue, we need to keep numbers crossing the stage manageable. Stage viewing is intended as an opportunity for the chorus representatives to get a feel for the walk pattern, the curtainless stage, and the room, and to report back to the chorus.

Your chorus would benefit greatly if, on their way to the stage viewing, your chorus representatives follow the contest walk pattern from the hotel lobby to the 2nd floor via the elevators or escalators, down the hall and into the ballroom. Here's the link to a map showing the [walk pattern](#). Once your chorus representatives familiarize themselves with the route and reach the ballroom for the stage viewing, we will be ready to begin.

The doors for stage viewing will open at 4:55 so that chorus representative can be seated. At 5:00, Linda Hilko, our stage manager, will start the stage viewing with a brief introduction. I say "brief" because it is our hope that this email and the website (do check out the FAQ page and the recorded Know Before You Go session) will have answered all of your questions before you get to the stage viewing. But just in case you missed something, Linda, the ADM judges, and I expect to be there to answer questions. Please ask your chorus representatives to be there at 5:00 to hear Linda's introductory remarks and to ask any remaining questions.

Once questions are answered, chorus representatives will line up in the hallway by the stage door entrance, and proceed up the ADA ramp and across the stage for a quick look around. We intend to keep a flow going, with several groups moving across the stage at the same time. On the stage, the four-step risers will be set as for the contest, with safety rails on. The plan is that the lights will be set as for contest, as well. The **stage specs** are at this link on the website: [stage specs](#). If the chorus stage representatives would review them in advance, everyone will be one step ahead when the stage viewing takes place. Consider this sentence a smiley face! Please

note everyone will be using the ADA ramp on the stage right side to enter and to exit the stage. Space constraints mean that there is no main curtain and no ramp or stairs on the stage left side.

When the chorus representatives leave the stage, they will be guided by volunteers to the spot where chorus members will enter the ballroom after performing.

When choruses arrive backstage, stage right, on the day of contest, members will be asked to place all **personal belongings** on a small cart, which will be moved during the chorus performance so that chorus members can pick up belongings after they have left the backstage area. Time spent picking up belongings post-performance has been the cause of many a contest delay. Please encourage chorus members to carry the absolute minimum, to combine belongings of several members into one (closed) bag if at all possible, or to leave belongings with trusted friends in the audience. If members' belongings include liquids, a reminder to tighten caps to prevent spills would be much appreciated. And please ask chorus members to leave any valuables in a safe location elsewhere. Paying attention to these details will make the contest experience better for everyone, so thank you in advance!

Those of you who have been in the chorus contest before know that we make a strong effort to balance chorus travel and preparation needs with audience expectations and the overall weekend schedule. A significant cause of contest delay is choruses that are not ready to head to the stage when their time in the warmup room is over. To address that, our contest pattern comes with a complimentary three-minute warning in the rehearsal room! This is the signal to the chorus that it is time to wrap up singing, gather your (very few!) belongings, take that last swig of water, check lipstick, exchange final pre-performance hugs or elbow bumps, and proceed directly toward the stage as soon as the volunteer opens the warmup room door again.

When our choruses are prepared to move from their warmup room when called, we are able to run a contest that stays on schedule and respects our audience, the later contestants, and the start of subsequent activities. Choruses that have rehearsed entrances, exits, and the use of any props (or other set up) with mindful efficiency support a positive contest experience for our audience and our later performers. Please be part of that chorus!

As you may already have heard, we do not have space for **evaluations sessions** on site this year. We have been fortunate at a few venues in recent years to have been able to try some variations on eval sessions at IC&C. Those variations were of limited success in light of both time and space considerations. So we will revert to Harmony's policy, actually in place since 2003, that there will not be feedback from judges for IC&C performances. The policy recognizes that our Area contests offer our primary on-stage education opportunities, and that, try as we might, it is often impossible to create space for contestant feedback in our IC&C schedule. Please use your chorus performance at IC&C this year simply to experience the joy of performing, and please do not contact judges for further feedback after the convention ends. Remember, our panelists are all volunteers, and many have day jobs and families to attend to once they get home. They are going to be putting in some mighty long days on our behalf, and I have assured them that we will respect their personal time.

Having said that, if your director and music team feel that your scores are in some way inexplicable, perhaps based on the feedback that you received from audience members, coaches, or knowledgeable friends after your performance, please ask your director to contact me with your questions or concerns, and I will see whether there are options available.

Speaking of directors, if someone other than the person or persons indicated on your Contest Information Form will be **directing** your chorus, and if you haven't already notified the Corporate Office or me of the change, please submit an amended form right away so that the ADM team and the convention program designers have that information.

As for the last two years, **photos** will be taken on stage right after your chorus performs. It would be good to have a pose rehearsed! If you plan to purchase photos, please be sure to have your [photo form](#) completed and ready to turn it in when you are in your warmup room during the pattern. *[October 17, 2024 update] The good news is that you will not need to review photos on site to pick your preferred one. Our photographer will post all four photos on line, for you to choose the official one there.*

The schedule for meeting with the photographer is by order of appearance. If the contest runs late (but it won't right?!), the adjusted start time and fifteen-minute intervals will be announced from the stage after the contest.

Those reviewing the list very carefully may notice that the choruses singing in the ninth and tenth positions are swapped from their positions in the random draw. This followed an ICJ Committee waiver of the contest rule that prohibits changes to the order of appearance to accommodate dual membership. The waiver recognized that, against the odds, last year's random draw put these two choruses in exactly the same back-to-back positions as this year, and that the dual member is the director of one of the choruses. This swap has no effect on the singing position of any other choruses, and was arranged with the support of both choruses involved.

And finally, although the **song registration** is not due till two weeks before contest, there is no time like the present for getting this done. Some of you have already submitted the form, for which I say thanks. If you haven't yet submitted it, you can find the form HAR-82 under the forms link on our members-only page.

The countdown is on. See you in Louisville!

Kathy Greason, ICJC