



SOUTHERN SCREAMS HAUNTED HOUSE · EVENT GUIDE

HAUNTED HOUSE GUIDE

How the haunt runs: contact, scare zones, effects, and set safety.

CONFIDENTIAL · USE WITH THE COMPANY HANDBOOK

VERSION 2026.4

This guide works with the Southern Screams Company Handbook. Read both.
The version posted on the Scream Team Hub (southernscreams.com/screamteam) always controls.

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Haunted House Guide

Everything specific to working the Southern Screams Haunted House.

This guide works together with the **Company Handbook**, which covers pay, scheduling, conduct, emergency codes, incident reports, and your rights at every event. Where they overlap, this guide adds event-specific detail; it never replaces the Handbook.

NOT AN EMPLOYMENT CONTRACT

This guide is not a contract of employment and does not change at-will status. The version posted on the Scream Team Hub always controls.

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H1 Welcome to the Haunted House

The Southern Screams Haunted House is our flagship: a timed-entry, high-intensity walkthrough that runs each fall at Holy City Brewing in North Charleston.

This guide covers how the haunted house runs: guest contact, scare zones, effects, wardrobe, the alcohol-service venue, and set safety. Everything else (pay, scheduling, conduct, emergency codes, incidents, and your rights) is in the Company Handbook. Read both before your first shift.

THE ONE RULE YOU CANNOT FORGET

You never initiate contact with a guest. Not a tap, not a grab, not a blocked path, not because they said it was okay. Section H2 explains incidental and intentional contact and exactly what to do about each.

H2 Performer Conduct & the No-Touch Rule

The Scream Team is the product. Everything below exists so the scare lands and nobody gets hurt doing it.

THE NO-TOUCH RULE

You do not initiate contact with a guest. Ever. Under any circumstances, in any costume, in any zone, for any reason. Not a tap, not a grab, not a brush of a hand, not a blocked path that forces contact, not "they said it was okay." A guest cannot give you permission to touch them. Intentionally initiating contact with a guest is grounds for immediate termination and may expose you to personal liability.

Contact: intentional vs. incidental

The no-touch rule is absolute: you never choose to touch a guest. But this attraction is dark, tight, and full of startled people, and contact will happen anyway. What we do about it depends on who started it and whether it was deliberate.

	GUEST-INITIATED	EMPLOYEE-INITIATED
Incidental	Create space, reset, tell your leader	Stop, check on them, incident report the same night
Intentional	Full protocol below, incident report the same night	Immediate termination

INCIDENTAL CONTACT

Unplanned, non-aggressive, and over the moment it happens. In a dark walkthrough, it is normal.

- A startled guest recoils or stumbles into you.
- A guest grabs your arm by reflex and lets go right away.
- A guest brushes past you in a corridor built to be tight.
- A guest steadies themselves on you, a wall, or a prop.
- Your costume, cape, mask, or prop touches someone as you move past.

INTENTIONAL CONTACT

Deliberate, targeted, or continued after the moment has passed.

- Striking, punching, kicking, shoving, or tackling.
- Grabbing and holding an arm, costume, mask, prop, light, or radio.
- Pulling, snatching, or trying to unmask you.
- Any contact of a sexual nature. This is never incidental.
- Contact that continues after you create distance or ask them to stop.
- Contact from a guest or group that has already made contact once tonight.

WHEN YOU CANNOT TELL, CALL IT INTENTIONAL

Report it and let leadership sort it out. If you are wrong, the cost is a form. If you are wrong the other way, the next performer in that guest's path pays for it. Your response in the moment is the same either way: you do not push, grab, strike, block, or make contact back, not once, not lightly, not in character. Intent changes what happens after the contact. It never changes what you do during it.

If a guest touches you incidentally**1 Create space**

Step back and reset your position. Do not react to it.

2 Stay in character if it is safe

A guest who bumped you while jumping does not need to be pulled out of the show. If they seem shaken or embarrassed, drop it and give them room.

3 Tell your leader

At your next break or at close. No incident report is needed unless someone was hurt, nearly hurt, or complained.

4 Speak up if it keeps happening

Repeated incidental contact at one position is a layout problem, not a performer problem. We would rather change the corridor than coach three people through the same bruise.

If a guest touches you intentionally

- 1 Break contact and step back**
Do not push, grab, or retaliate. Create distance.
- 2 Drop the scare**
Character is over. Your safety outranks the show.
- 3 Call it in**
Radio your leader with your location, using the format in Handbook Section 20.
- 4 Do not confront**
Never argue with, chase, or follow a guest through the attraction. Leadership and security take it from there.
- 5 Write it up**
File an incident report before you leave for the night, while it is fresh. See Handbook Section 26.

If you make incidental contact with a guest

- 1 Stop and create space immediately**
- 2 Check on them**
Drop character long enough to ask, in a plain voice, whether they are okay. Then let them go.
- 3 Radio your leader**
Right away, not at the end of the night.
- 4 File an incident report before you leave**
Every time, including when nobody was hurt or upset.

THIS IS NOT WHAT GETS YOU FIRED

Contact you did not intend is not a firing offense, and we are not looking to make it one. Hiding it is different. A brushed shoulder we documented at 10 p.m. is a non-event. The same contact we hear about three weeks later from an attorney is not. Report it and the company stands behind you. Conceal it and you are on your own.

Contact of a sexual nature is never incidental

Groping, grabbing, or any touching of a sexual nature by a guest is never treated as an accident, a bit, or a customer service problem, no matter how brief it was, how the guest describes it, or how crowded the room was.

Disengage, radio a leader, and go directly to leadership. You may call 911 yourself and you may make a police report. You do not need our permission, and no one here will discourage you or ask you to think about the show first. See Handbook Section 06.

Performance standards

- Play your assigned character as directed. Improvising within the character is welcome; changing the character is not.
- Stay in character in front of guests unless there is a safety issue. Then drop it instantly and completely.
- Commit to your zone. Do not wander, visit friends in other zones, or leave a position uncovered. Stay until a leader dismisses you.
- Keep quiet backstage during show hours. Sound bleed kills the scare in the next room.
- Support newer cast members. The person you help in week one is the person covering your zone in week six.

Contact between performers

Staged contact between performers (a grab, a drag, a struggle that guests are meant to walk in on) happens only when a leader has approved it, it has been rehearsed, and every performer in it has agreed.

- Consent is per person and per night. Anyone can withdraw it at any time without explaining why, and it will not affect their casting, zone, hours, or next season.
- Nothing in an approved bit allows contact with a guest in any form.
- Improvised physical contact with another performer in front of guests is not allowed, no matter how well you know each other.

Reading the guest

Part of the job is noticing when a guest has stopped enjoying it. Watch for guests who are crying, hyperventilating, frozen in place, in medical distress, visibly intoxicated, or being pushed along by their own group.

- Back off immediately and give them room. A guest in genuine distress is not a target.
- Signal a leader to walk them to the nearest exit if they want out.
- Never single out one guest repeatedly, and never follow a guest who is trying to get away from you.
- Children, older guests, and anyone using a mobility aid get extra distance by default.

Service animals, mobility aids & assistive devices

- Never touch, block, deliberately startle, photograph, feed, or interact with a service animal. It is working; treat it as an extension of the person.
- Never touch or lean on a wheelchair, walker, cane, crutch, or scooter. Under the no-touch rule, these are part of the guest's body.
- Never ask a guest about their disability or question a service animal. Any issue goes to leadership.
- Never scare into the path of a guest using a mobility aid. Give a clear path and extra distance, and radio ahead rather than closing the gap to catch up.

Talking with guests

- Be courteous and professional out of character. Never argue with a guest; send it to a leader.
- Correct guest behavior calmly and once, then escalate. You are not security.
- Report any injury, costume malfunction, or show-affecting issue to your leader immediately.

Show readiness

- Arrive with enough time to clock in, check in, make the Pre-Show huddle, and finish costume and makeup. Being in the makeup chair at start time is being late.
- Drink water before and during the shift. Warm up your voice; screaming cold is how people lose a week of work.
- Walk your zone before doors open and check for hazards, blocked exits, and burned-out lighting (see Section H6).

H3 Scare Zones, Pacing & Effects

How the attraction actually runs. Pacing is a safety function before it is a show function, and most of what can go wrong in a dark walkthrough goes wrong here.

Zone discipline

- Work your assigned zone and character. Do not trade zones, follow groups into the next room, or free-roam.
- Never block a doorway, corridor, or stair. A guest who cannot move forward is a crush risk.
- Never position yourself so a guest's recoil sends them into a wall, a step-down, or another guest. Recoil is the most common source of incidental contact in the building. If your position causes it every night, the position is wrong; say so and we will move it.
- Reset your position and your prop after each group. A misplaced prop becomes a trip hazard in the dark.
- Hold your position until a leader releases you, even after the last group clears.

Group pacing

- Send groups on the interval you were given. If groups are stacking up in your zone, radio it in rather than shortening the interval further.
- Watch for conga lines, where a group grabs shoulders and moves as a chain. A conga line falls as one unit. Break it up verbally: "Single file, hands to yourself, keep moving."
- Watch for groups leaving someone behind. A guest alone in the dark is a Code Green waiting to happen. If it is a child, follow the separated-child steps in Handbook Section 21.
- Never chase a running guest. Radio ahead so the next zone can slow them down verbally.

Effects & motorized props

- Operate fog, haze, strobe, air cannons, drop panels, and audio triggers only at assigned settings, and only if you were trained on that specific device.
- Motorized props, including bladeless chainsaw props, are run only by specifically trained and assigned performers. Never point one at a guest, bring it within arm's reach of a guest, or run it in a confined corridor.
- If an effect malfunctions, shut it off, block access to the area, and radio a leader. Do not attempt a repair during operating hours.
- Report fog fluid on the floor immediately. Fog residue plus a running guest equals a fall.

Darkness & exits

- Every performer carries, or can immediately reach, the assigned light source for their zone.
- Know the two nearest exits from your position and how to reach each with the lights off. Walk them at Dress Rehearsal.
- Exits, exit signs, and exit paths are never blocked, curtained over, hidden by fog, or decorated in a way that hides them.

WHEN TO RADIO A LEADER

Ejection decisions belong to leadership. Your job is to observe, disengage, and report. Radio a leader about any guest who: makes intentional contact with a performer, prop, or set piece; is intoxicated, aggressive, or threatening; records where recording is not allowed or uses a light that exposes the set; refuses to keep moving or tries to re-enter a room; or brings in a weapon, a replica, or any prohibited item.

H4 Wardrobe, Makeup & Special Effects

Southern Screams provides costumes, makeup, and effects. They are company property and a significant investment. Treat them that way.

Assignment	Costumes are assigned by role. Do not alter, substitute, or leave out any piece without approval from your leader or the FX lead.
Condition	Report tears, broken fasteners, failing masks, and missing pieces immediately. A costume failure mid-show is a safety problem, not a wardrobe problem.
Off premises	Costumes, masks, and props never leave the property without written authorization.
Makeup	Applied on site by the FX team. Do not change an application without approval; makeup design carries character continuity and photo standards.

Allergies	Tell leadership about any latex, adhesive, cosmetic, or material allergy before application. We will find an alternative.
Completeness	Costume and makeup must be complete before you enter any guest-facing area.
Sightlines	If a mask, hood, or headpiece cuts off your peripheral vision, tell the FX lead. Most employee-initiated contact traces back to a performer who could not see the guest coming.
Footwear	Closed-toe, secure, non-slip shoes at all times, including backstage. This is not negotiable.
Personal items	Phones, bags, keys, and street clothes are never visible to guests. Use the storage provided.

Dressing room standards

- Keep dressing areas and shared workspaces clean. Shared makeup and applicators are sanitized between uses.
- Throw trash in the designated containers. No food or drink waste is left in dressing or set areas.
- Report hazards and damage in dressing areas to a leader.
- Dressing rooms are private. Photos, recording, and streaming in them are prohibited (Handbook Section 18).

DAMAGE AND LIABILITY

Ordinary wear and damage that happens while performing normally is a company cost. Deliberate misuse or gross neglect is different. See Handbook Section 10 for how any reimbursement is handled and what we will not do.

H5 Working in an Alcohol-Service Environment

The attraction operates at Holy City Brewing, a licensed venue. Alcohol will be present on operating nights. Your job is to stay clear of it and protect the show from it.

Your position

- You are not venue staff. You do not pour, carry, serve, check IDs, or cut anyone off. That is the brewery's license and its team's job.
- You do not accept a drink from a guest. Not at the end of the night, not as a tip, not "after you clock out" while still in costume.
- You do not drink alcohol in costume or in any guest-visible area on an operating night, on or off the clock.
- You do not scare a guest holding an open drink. A startle with a glass in hand is a cut, and alcohol spilled on a dark floor is the next guest's fall. If a position cannot be worked without reaching around a drink, tell a leader and we will reset it.

Intoxicated guests

- 1 Do not engage**
An intoxicated guest is not a scare target and is not yours to manage. Do not argue, escalate, or match their energy.
- 2 Create distance**
Step back and hold your position. Never put yourself between an intoxicated guest and an exit.
- 3 Radio a leader**
Give your location and a brief, factual description. Leadership and venue staff handle refusal of entry and removal.
- 4 Never physically intervene**
Except to remove yourself or another employee from immediate danger. You have no authority to restrain a guest.
- 5 Document it**
Any incident involving an impaired guest gets an incident report before you leave.

SERVICE DECISIONS BELONG TO THE VENUE

Never tell a guest they can or cannot be served, and never speculate to a guest about anyone's intoxication. Route it to your leader.

H6 Prop & Set Safety

Our sets are built for effect in the dark. That makes them the most likely source of an injury on the property.

Everyone

- Never alter, move, or repurpose a prop without a leader's approval.
- Do not climb, lean on, sit on, or hang from set pieces, walls, or scaffolding.
- Report broken props, exposed fasteners, loose flooring, and damaged scenery immediately, then block the hazard until it is fixed.
- Keep exits and exit paths clear of props, cables, and fog lines at all times.

Performers

- Walk your zone, path, and blind spots with the lights on before every operating night.
- Know where the tight corners, uneven flooring, low clearances, and step-downs are in your area.
- Never jump into a guest's path in a way that could cause a collision or fall. (Positioning rules are in Section H3.)

Crew & build

- Wear the right protective equipment (gloves, eye protection, hearing protection) when building, cutting, painting, or rigging.
- Use ladders, lifts, tools, and power equipment only if you are trained and authorized.
- Label paint, adhesives, fuel, and fog fluid, and store them away from public areas and ignition sources.
- Never work alone on an overhead rig, a lift, or an electrical modification.

Haunted House Quick Reference

CODE RED

FIRE OR SMOKE

- 1** Announce "Code Red" three times on the radio with your location.
- 2** Try to put it out only if you are trained and it is safe.
- 3** Lights up, plain voice. Evacuate guests to the nearest marked exit.
- 4** Sweep your area if safe, report it clear, go to the Rally Point.

CODE GREEN

MEDICAL EMERGENCY

- 1** Announce "Code Green" three times on the radio with your location.
- 2** Do not move the person unless they are in immediate danger.
- 3** First aid only if trained. Clear space; do not let a crowd form.
- 4** Send someone to the entrance to meet and guide EMS in.

ALL CLEAR

Leadership only. Nothing resumes until you hear it. **Evacuation** is called in plain language: "Emergency, emergency, emergency."

SEPARATED CHILD · NO CODE, PLAIN LANGUAGE

- Radio "Separated child," location, age, height, clothing. Never a name.
- If the child is with you, stay put and keep them with you.
- Leaders hold the exits. Search your own zone only.

CONTACT WITH A GUEST

Incidental — bump, recoil, reflex grab, brush in a tight corridor

- Create space and reset; stay in character if safe.
- Tell your leader at break or close.

Intentional — strike, grab-and-hold, mask pull, anything sexual, anything repeated

- Break contact, step back. Do not retaliate. Character is over.
- Radio your leader. Do not confront or follow. Report before you leave.

You made the contact — even by accident

- Stop, check on them, radio it in now. Report every time.

BEFORE DOORS, EVERY NIGHT

- ☐ Clocked in, checked in, at the Pre-Show huddle
- ☐ Two nearest exits, walked with the lights off
- ☐ First aid kit, extinguisher, Rally Point
- ☐ Radio works, right channel
- ☐ Zone walked: no new hazards, exits clear, props reset
- ☐ Phone silenced and stored

OTHER SITUATIONS

- **Power outage:** hold guests, use your light, wait.
- **Prop or set failure:** stop traffic, hold, radio.
- **Effect malfunction:** shut it off if trained; otherwise radio and block.
- **Threat or violence:** disengage, move to an exit, radio, call 911.

FOLLOW THE CONTACT RULES · NEVER BLOCK AN EXIT · ANYONE CAN CALL A CODE

Any employee may call 911 at any time without permission. You will never be second-guessed for it.