



SOUTHERN SCREAMS HAUNTED HOUSE • 2026 SEASON

EMPLOYEE HANDBOOK

Policies, expectations, and the standards behind every night we open.

CONFIDENTIAL

HAUNTED HOUSE • ALL CLASSIFICATIONS VERSION 2026.2

ISSUED ELECTRONICALLY

The current version of this handbook is posted on the Scream Team Hub at southernscreams.com/screamteam.

The posted version always controls. Check there before you rely on a saved or printed copy.

Confidential. Intended solely for Southern Screams personnel. Unauthorized use or distribution is prohibited.

This handbook is not a contract of employment. Employment with Southern Screams, LLC is at-will.

About This Handbook

This handbook describes the policies, expectations, and practices of Southern Screams Haunted House for the 2026 season. It applies to every employee assigned to the attraction, whether you work one weekend or every night we are open.

Read it once in full before your first shift. Then keep it — a digital copy lives on the Scream Team Hub, and you are responsible for knowing what is in it.

DOCUMENT CONTROL

Version	2026.1
Effective	Upon issuance for the 2026 operating year
Supersedes	All prior editions of the Southern Screams Employee Handbook, including 2022-25 versions
Applies to	All Southern Screams Haunted House employees, all classifications
Companion documents	Employment Agreement · Confidentiality Agreement · Safety Acknowledgement · Medical Release · Handbook Quiz (Online)
What changed	Version 2026.1 includes updates and refinements designed to make the handbook clearer, more useful, and easier to navigate. These improvements better reflect our current standards, expectations, and operations.
Custodian	Southern Screams leadership. Direct questions and suggested corrections to leadership.
Revisions	Southern Screams may add to, modify, or withdraw any policy at any time, with or without notice. Material changes are announced through official channels. The version posted to the Scream Team Hub always controls.

THIS HANDBOOK IS NOT AN EMPLOYMENT CONTRACT

Nothing in this handbook — and nothing said by any leader, in any meeting, or in any training — creates a contract of employment, a guarantee of hours, or a guarantee of continued employment. Employment with Southern Screams, LLC is at-will: either you or the company may end the relationship at any time, with or without cause and with or without notice. Only a written agreement signed by an authorized officer of Southern Screams, LLC can alter that.

Contents

PART ONE

The Company

01	Welcome to the Scream Team	4
02	Mission, Vision & Values	5
03	Your Rights Under This Handbook	6

PART TWO

Employment Essentials

04	Equal Employment Opportunity	8
05	Accommodations — Disability, Religion & Pregnancy	8
06	Harassment, Discrimination & Retaliation	10
07	Employment Classifications	12
08	Minimum Age for Employment	13
09	Hiring, Onboarding & Probationary Period	14
10	Compensation & Payroll	15
11	Breaks, Meals & Lactation	16
12	Scheduling, Attendance & Punctuality	17
13	Time Off & Leaves of Absence	18
14	Perks, Discounts & Recognition	19

PART THREE

Conduct & Standards

15	Employee Expectations	21
16	Performer Conduct & the No-Touch Rule	22
17	Scare Zones, Pacing & Effects	26
18	Wardrobe, Makeup & Special Effects	27
19	Drug & Alcohol-Free Workplace	28
20	Working in an Alcohol-Service Environment	29
21	Personal Phone & Social Media Use	30
22	Confidentiality, Creative Property & Media	31
23	Outside Employment & Conflicts of Interest	32
24	Communication Channels & Radio Protocol	32

PART FOUR

Safety & Emergencies

25	Safety & Emergency Protocols	34
26	Prop & Set Safety	36
27	Employee Injury & Workers' Compensation	37
28	Weather & Outdoor Working Conditions	38
29	Illness & Contagious Disease	38
30	Weapons & Workplace Violence	39
31	Guest Complaints & Incident Reports	40
32	Parking, Transportation & After-Hours Safety	41
33	Lost & Found	42

PART FIVE

Records, Discipline & Separation

34	Personnel Records & Changes	43
35	Disciplinary Policy	43
36	Resignation & Termination	45

PART ONE

The Company

Who we are, what we build, and the standard we hold every night we open.

01

Welcome to the Scream Team

You have joined a production company that happens to run attractions. Every night we open, tons of people walk into something we built out of plywood, light, sound, and nerve — and what they remember is YOU.

WHAT YOU ARE JOINING

The Southern Screams Haunted House is our flagship attraction: a timed-entry, high-intensity walkthrough operating each fall at Holy City Brewing.

This handbook covers the haunted house. Southern Screams, LLC operates other attractions across the year; if you are assigned to one of them, you will receive the handbook for that operation separately.

Whether you are a first-time seasonal hire or a returning veteran, you are now part of the crew that makes those nights work. Some of you will play monsters. Some will scan tickets, sell merchandise, check waivers, hold a queue line together, or watch security cameras. Every one of those jobs is load-bearing. There is no such thing as a background role in a live show.

2020

ESTABLISHED

Fall

SEASON

1

STANDARD

Safety

ALWAYS FIRST

A NOTE FROM LEADERSHIP

We are glad you are here. Your creativity, your energy, and your willingness to look out for each other are what turn our event into a true experience. Your voice matters. Share your ideas, look for ways to make each night better, and speak up whenever you see a concern. Support one another, take pride in your role, and bring your best to every performance. Together, we can create an unforgettable season for our guests, and for each other.

SOUTHERN SCREAMS LEADERSHIP

WHAT WE OWE YOU

Expectations run in both directions. From us, you should expect:

- A schedule communicated in advance, and honest notice when it changes.

01

- Pay that is accurate and on time, with a clear way to fix it when it is not.
- Training before you are asked to do something, not after.
- A workplace free of harassment, and a real path to report it if you experience one.
- Equipment, costumes, and sets that are maintained — and a leader who listens when they are not.
- Being treated like an adult professional, whatever your age or role.

IF SOMETHING IN HERE IS WRONG, TELL US

This handbook is written by people, and people miss things. If a policy is unclear, contradicts what you were told in training, or does not match how your attraction actually operates, raise it with leadership. Corrections make the next edition better.

02

Mission, Vision & Values

MISSION

Deliver unforgettable, immersive entertainment that amazes guests while prioritizing safety, professionalism, and storytelling excellence.

VISION

To become the Southeast's premier destination for immersive entertainment — known for innovation, inclusion, creativity, and an unmatched guest experience.

CORE VALUES

S — Safety First	Above all else. Guests and team members go home the way they arrived. No scare, no show note, and no schedule pressure outranks this.
C — Creativity	We embrace imagination and bold ideas, and we keep looking for new ways to frighten, surprise, and delight. Good ideas are welcome from anyone at any level.
T — Team Spirit	Collaboration, mutual respect, and support. Every role is essential. Teamwork makes the screams work.
I — Inclusivity	Everyone deserves a place in the Southern Screams family. We celebrate difference and we do not tolerate anyone who makes another person feel unwelcome.
P — Professionalism	We show up on time, we do what we said we would do, and we treat people with dignity — in costume and out of it.

02

VALUES ARE ENFORCEABLE

These are not decoration. Conduct that violates a core value is grounds for corrective action under Section 35, up to and including termination — most often under Safety First and Professionalism.

03

Your Rights Under This Handbook

Before we describe what we expect of you, here is what this document does not and cannot take away from you.

PROTECTED ACTIVITY

Nothing in this handbook — including the confidentiality, media, social media, communication, or conduct policies — restricts, prohibits, or is intended to interfere with your rights under Section 7 of the National Labor Relations Act. You retain the right to:

- Discuss your own wages, hours, benefits, and working conditions with coworkers, with people outside the company, and on social media.
- Act together with coworkers to improve working conditions.
- Raise concerns about pay, safety, or treatment without retaliation.
- Decline to participate in any of the above.

REPORTING TO GOVERNMENT AGENCIES

You do not need permission from Southern Screams, and you do not need to notify us, to file a charge or communicate with a government agency. That includes the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, the South Carolina Human Affairs Commission, the Department of Labor, OSHA, the National Labor Relations Board, the Federal Motor Carrier Safety Administration, and any state or local equivalent. Retaliation for doing so is prohibited and is itself a violation of this handbook.

TRADE SECRET IMMUNITY NOTICE — 18 U.S.C. § 1833(B)

Under the federal Defend Trade Secrets Act, you cannot be held criminally or civilly liable for disclosing a trade secret in confidence to a government official or an attorney solely for the purpose of reporting or investigating a suspected violation of law, or in a document filed under seal in a lawsuit or other proceeding.

HARASSMENT AND ASSAULT CLAIMS

Consistent with the federal Speak Out Act and the Ending Forced Arbitration of Sexual Assault and Sexual Harassment Act, no confidentiality provision in this handbook or in any Southern Screams agreement prevents you from speaking about conduct you reasonably believe to be sexual harassment or sexual assault, and no pre-dispute arbitration provision will be enforced against you as to such claims where you elect otherwise.

03

WHAT THIS HANDBOOK DOES NOT CONTAIN

Arbitration	This handbook contains no agreement to arbitrate. Any dispute-resolution obligations that apply to you arise from your signed Employment Agreement, not from this document.
Wage terms	Your specific rate, schedule commitment, and any deductions are set out in your written hire paperwork.
Guest waivers	Guest-facing terms, waivers, and admission conditions are separate legal documents. Never explain, interpret, or modify them for a guest.

PART TWO

Employment Essentials

Classification, pay, schedule, accommodation, and leave — the mechanics of working here.

04

Equal Employment Opportunity

Southern Screams, LLC is an Equal Opportunity Employer. We do not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, creed, sex, pregnancy or related conditions, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, national origin, ancestry, age, physical or mental disability, genetic information, military or veteran status, marital status, or any other characteristic protected by federal, state, or local law.

WHERE THIS APPLIES

- Recruiting, auditions, interviewing, and hiring
- Role assignment, casting, and scheduling
- Pay, promotion, and access to advanced or lead roles
- Training, discipline, layoff, rehire, and termination
- Every other term and condition of employment

All employment decisions are made on merit, qualifications, demonstrated reliability, and business need.

RETALIATION IS PROHIBITED

No one who reports discrimination in good faith, participates in an investigation, or requests an accommodation will face retaliation. Retaliation is treated as seriously as the underlying conduct and is grounds for immediate termination.

05

Accommodations — Disability, Religion & Pregnancy

If something about how we work is getting in the way of you doing your job, there is a process. Use it. You will not be penalized for asking.

HOW TO REQUEST AN ACCOMMODATION

- 1 Tell a leader or leadership**
Verbally or in writing. You do not need to use the word "accommodation," cite a statute, or provide a diagnosis to start the conversation.

05

- 2 We talk it through**
We will discuss what part of the job is difficult and what adjustments might work. This is a conversation, not an application.
- 3 Documentation if needed**
For medical accommodations we may ask for limited documentation confirming the limitation and suggested adjustments. We do not ask for your full medical record.
- 4 Decision and follow-up**
We implement what is reasonable, or explain why a request would create undue hardship and look for an alternative. We check back to confirm it is working.

WHAT ACCOMMODATION CAN LOOK LIKE HERE

Physical	Seated scare positions, reduced walking assignments, modified prop weight, additional or longer rest breaks, relocation to a cooler or better-lit zone.
Sensory	Adjusted exposure to strobe, fog, or sustained high-volume audio; alternate zone assignment.
Costume & FX	Alternate mask, alternate adhesive or makeup line for skin sensitivity, modified footwear where safety allows.
Religious	Schedule adjustment for observance, modification of grooming or costume requirements where operationally and safely possible.
Pregnancy	Additional breaks, water and seating access, limits on lifting and climbing, reassignment away from confined or high-traffic scare positions.

PREGNANCY AND RELATED CONDITIONS

Where applicable law requires it, we provide reasonable accommodation for pregnancy, childbirth, and related medical conditions — including recovery — without requiring you to take leave if an accommodation would let you keep working. Tell us early so we can plan around your season.

LACTATION ACCOMMODATION

Nursing employees are provided reasonable break time to express milk and a private space that is not a restroom, shielded from view and free from intrusion. Tell a leader in advance so the space is reserved and your zone coverage is arranged. See also Section 11.

06

Harassment, Discrimination & Retaliation

Zero tolerance, stated plainly: if it happens, we want to know, and we will act.

WHAT COUNTS

CATEGORY

EXAMPLES

Verbal harassment	Slurs, epithets, degrading jokes, sexual comments, comments about someone's body, persistent unwanted questions about someone's personal life.
Physical harassment	Unwanted touching, blocking someone's path, cornering, grabbing, or using a costume or character as cover for contact.
Sexual harassment	Unwanted advances, requests for dates after being declined, sexual propositions, sharing sexual images, conditioning shifts or roles on a personal relationship.
Discrimination	Treating someone differently in assignments, hours, casting, or discipline because of a protected characteristic.
Bullying & intimidation	Threats, targeted humiliation, sabotage of another person's work, deliberate exclusion, pile-on behavior in group chats.
Third-party harassment	Harassing conduct by a guest, vendor, contractor, or venue employee — comments, propositions, filming an employee, or contact of a sexual nature directed at an employee.
Retaliation	Cutting hours, reassigning, freezing out, or otherwise punishing someone for reporting or participating in an investigation.

IT COUNTS OFF THE CLOCK AND OFF THE PROPERTY

Harassment of a coworker in a group chat, on social media, at a cast party, or in the parking lot after close is still harassment of a coworker. This policy is not limited to your scheduled hours or to company property.

IT ALSO COUNTS WHEN IT COMES FROM A GUEST

This policy protects you from everyone on the property, not only from coworkers. If a guest, vendor, contractor, or venue employee directs slurs, sexual comments, propositions, persistent unwanted attention, comments about your body, or contact of a sexual nature at you, that is a workplace harassment issue and we treat it as one.

- **A ticket buys admission, not access to you.** You are never required to absorb it because someone paid to be here.
- **Disengage and radio a leader.** You do not have to finish the interaction, hold the position, or

06

stay in character.

- **Leadership handles removal.** Refusal of entry and ejection are leadership decisions, and at this venue some of them belong to venue staff. You are not security. See Section 20.
- **We will move you, reassign your zone, or remove the guest.** All of those are on the table, and none of them costs you hours.
- **File an incident report the same night.**
- **Retaliation is prohibited here too.** Reporting a guest will never cost you a shift, a zone, a role, or next season.

HOW TO REPORT — MORE THAN ONE DOOR

Report to whichever channel you are most comfortable with. You never have to report to the person the complaint is about, and you never have to go up a chain that runs through them.

CHANNEL	USE IT FOR	HOW
Your direct leader	Most concerns, fastest response	In person or by text
Any other leader	When your leader is involved or unavailable	In person, any shift
Leadership / owner	Anything, including conduct by a leader	Direct contact — see contact card in back matter
Written report	When you want a record or prefer not to speak in person	Email to leadership
Anonymous	When you are not ready to be identified	Written note to leadership. Note: anonymity can limit how far we can investigate.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT

- 1 **Acknowledgment**
We confirm we received the report, normally within 48 hours.
- 2 **Interim measures**
Where appropriate we separate the people involved by zone, shift, or assignment while we look into it. This is not a punishment of the reporter and will not reduce your hours.
- 3 **Investigation**
We speak with those involved and any witnesses. We keep the matter confidential to the extent we can while still investigating properly.
- 4 **Outcome**
We tell the reporter that the matter has been resolved and what, if anything, changed for them. We do not disclose another employee's discipline.

06

BAD-FAITH REPORTS

Knowingly fabricating a complaint is itself misconduct. A report that turns out to be unsubstantiated is **not** a bad-faith report — those are different things, and we treat them differently. Reporting something you honestly believed was wrong will never get you in trouble here.

07

Employment Classifications

You have two classifications that matter, and they answer different questions.

SCHEDULE CLASSIFICATION

CLASS	HOURS	DESCRIPTION	BENEFIT ELIGIBLE
Full-Time	30+ / wk	Year-round, consistent schedule	Eligible
Part-Time	Under 30 / wk	Ongoing or seasonal	Limited
Seasonal	Varies	Limited period tied to an event season. Most Southern Screams staff are seasonal.	Not eligible*
Temporary / Contract	Project	Short-term engagement or agency placement	Not eligible*

*Unless otherwise stated in writing at the time of hire.

FLSA CLASSIFICATION

Separately from the above, every employee is classified as non-exempt or exempt under the Fair Labor Standards Act. Your classification is stated in your hire paperwork.

Non-exempt

Paid for all hours actually worked, and entitled to overtime as described in Section 10. Nearly all Southern Screams staff are non-exempt. You must record every hour you work.

Exempt

Paid a fixed salary regardless of hours, and not entitled to overtime. Applies only where the role genuinely meets the federal duties and salary tests.

SEASONAL AMUSEMENT ESTABLISHMENTS

Certain seasonal amusement and recreational establishments qualify for an exemption from federal minimum wage and overtime requirements under FLSA § 13(a)(3). Where that exemption applies to a Southern Screams operation, it will be stated in writing in your hire paperwork before you work a shift. If your paperwork does not say so, assume standard overtime rules apply to you.

07

REHIRE CONSIDERATION

- Employees with strong attendance, teamwork, and policy adherence are prioritized for future seasons and for lead roles.
- Documented disciplinary issues, unapproved absences, or a no call / no show generally make a person ineligible.
- Rehire status is communicated on request and in advance of the next season's casting.

08

Minimum Age for Employment

Live attractions attract young applicants. Our hiring standard is simple, and it is stricter than the law requires.

EIGHTEEN AND OLDER

All new hires must be 18 years of age or older. This applies to every role, performer and support alike, and there are no exceptions — not for a parent's permission, not for prior experience at another attraction, and not for a role that looks low-risk. Age is confirmed through standard onboarding documentation.

WHY WE DRAW THE LINE THERE

- Our operating hours run late into the evening, well past the hours federal law permits for the youngest workers.
- The attraction is dark, confined, and physically demanding, and much of the build, effects, and rigging work falls under hazardous-occupation restrictions for minors.
- We operate at a licensed venue where alcohol is served on operating nights.
- A single hiring age keeps scheduling, break enforcement, and supervision simple — which makes it far more likely we get all three right.

EMPLOYEES HIRED BEFORE THIS POLICY

A small number of employees were hired under our previous policy and remain with us while still under 18. They are grandfathered, and their employment is not affected by this change. Every restriction below applies to them until their eighteenth birthday.

RESTRICTIONS FOR AN EMPLOYEE UNDER 18

- **Written parental or guardian consent** on file before any shift, including acknowledgment of the nature of the work and the hours involved.
- **No hazardous work.** No power tools, no powered material-handling equipment, no ladders or lifts, and no work on overhead rigging or electrical systems.
- **No operation of any company vehicle**, in any capacity.
- **No handling of alcohol** or alcohol containers in any capacity.
- **Break enforcement.** Breaks are scheduled and taken, not offered and skipped.
- **Supervision.** Never the only staff member assigned to an isolated area, and never assigned to a role that puts them alone with a guest out of sight of other staff.

08

- **Transportation home.** Not left waiting alone in the lot after close. See Section 32.

LEADERS ARE ACCOUNTABLE FOR THIS

A leader who schedules or assigns an employee under 18 outside these restrictions has committed a policy violation, regardless of whether the employee volunteered or their parent approved. Child labor violations carry penalties against the company, not the employee.

09

Hiring, Onboarding & Probationary Period

THE PATH IN

- 1 Apply**
Complete the online application and submit required documentation.
- 2 Interview or audition**
Performer roles audition; support and technical roles interview. Both are evaluated on reliability as much as talent.
- 3 Conditional offer**
Offers are conditional on eligibility verification and completion of onboarding requirements.
- 4 Onboarding systems**
E-Verify+ (as required by federal law), ADP for payroll, the Scream Team Hub, your paperwork packet and Handbook Quiz, and Sithon for scheduling.
- 5 Orientation**
Company overview, safety fundamentals, costume assignment, and role-specific instruction.
- 6 Dress Rehearsal**
Mandatory for every employee before season open. Facility walk, emergency routes, and full run-through in costume.
- 7 Probationary period**
Typically the first two weeks of scheduled shifts for seasonal roles.

DEADLINES

E-Verify+ must be completed within two days of hire — this is a federal requirement and we cannot extend it. All other onboarding items are due before Dress Rehearsal, not before Orientation. Returning employees complete paperwork and the Handbook Quiz again each season.

PROBATIONARY PERIOD

During the probationary period both you and Southern Screams are evaluating fit. Performance, attendance, and conduct are monitored closely and feedback is given directly. If expectations are not met, employment may end without progressive discipline. Completing the probationary period does not change your at-will status.

09

RETURNING EMPLOYEES

- Complete new-season paperwork, the Handbook acknowledgment, and the Handbook Quiz.
- Attend Dress Rehearsal even if the layout is familiar — sets, exits, and codes change year to year.
- Expect a role conversation. Returning does not guarantee the same character, zone, or role.
- Read Section 16 again even if you have worked here for years. The contact rules changed this season.

10

Compensation & Payroll

Transparent, on time, and correctable. If your pay is wrong, we want to hear about it immediately — not at the end of the season.

THE BASICS

Pay rate	Communicated in writing at hire, rehire, or role change. Rates vary by role, experience, and classification.
Pay schedule	Two pay periods per seasonal event, by direct deposit or paper check through ADP.
Pay stubs	Issued each period showing hours, gross pay, taxes, and any deductions.
Timekeeping	All non-exempt employees clock in and out through the designated system for every shift, including when you return from an unpaid meal break.
Corrections	Missed punches and time adjustments go to your leader for approval the same night where possible.
Lead & specialty rates	Lead performers, FX, and technical crew may carry a higher base rate. Rate differences are role-based, not personal.

OVERTIME

Non-exempt employees are paid one and one-half times the regular rate for hours worked over 40 in a workweek, unless a valid statutory exemption applies and has been disclosed to you in writing (see Section 07). Overtime must be approved in advance by a leader — but if you work it, we pay it, approved or not. Working unapproved overtime is a scheduling issue we address separately; it is never a reason to withhold pay.

OFF-THE-CLOCK WORK IS PROHIBITED

Do not work before you clock in or after you clock out. Do not skip recording time spent in costume fittings, makeup, pre-shift meetings, cleanup, or a leader-directed task after close. If anyone asks you to work off the clock, report it to leadership immediately — that instruction is a violation of this policy no matter who gives it.

10

DEDUCTIONS

South Carolina requires that employees be notified in writing at the time of hiring of the wages agreed upon, the time and place of payment, and any deductions the employer will make. Southern Screams will not make a deduction from your wages unless it was disclosed in your hire paperwork or you have separately authorized it in writing.

- No deduction will reduce your pay below the applicable minimum wage for the hours you worked, or cut into overtime pay.
- Costume, prop, or equipment loss caused by ordinary wear or by an accident in the normal course of the job is a company cost, not yours.
- Where loss results from deliberate misuse or gross neglect, we may seek reimbursement — through a separate written authorization or other lawful means, not by unilateral payroll deduction.
- You will receive at least seven days' written notice of any change to your wage rate or to the deductions taken from it.

FIXING A PAY PROBLEM

- 1 Tell your leader the same day you notice it**
Bring your own record of hours if you have one.
- 2 Escalate to leadership if it is not resolved**
Do not wait for the next pay period to see if it corrects itself.
- 3 We investigate and correct**
Confirmed underpayments are corrected promptly — normally within one pay cycle, and sooner where we can.

Keep your own record of hours worked. It is the fastest way to catch a discrepancy, and we will take it seriously.

FALSIFYING TIME RECORDS

Clocking in for another person, clocking in before you are on site, or altering recorded hours is grounds for immediate termination — for the person who did it and for anyone who asked them to.

11

Breaks, Meals & Lactation

Long nights in costume are physically demanding. Breaks are part of how we keep the show safe, not a favor.

BREAK	WHEN	LENGTH	PAID	RULES
Rest break	Shifts over 4 hours	5–10 min	Yes	Stay clocked in. Designated break areas only, out of guest view.

11

BREAK	WHEN	LENGTH	PAID	RULES
Meal break	Shifts over 8 hours	30 min	No	Clock out. You must be fully relieved of duty — if you are working through it, you are on the clock.
Heat / cold relief	As conditions require	As needed	Yes	Never denied. See Section 28.
Lactation break	As needed	Reasonable	Per law	Private space provided that is not a restroom.

GROUND RULES

- Coordinate breaks with your leader so your zone stays covered — but do not skip a break because coverage is tight. Tell your leader coverage is tight.
- Eating is restricted to designated off-stage areas. Water is always permitted, including at your position, in any condition.
- Return on time. A late return holds up the person waiting to go on theirs.
- Do not take an unscheduled break without telling a leader — if you need to step off for any reason, someone has to know your position is empty.

IF YOU ARE BEING DENIED BREAKS

Report it to leadership. A leader who consistently denies breaks to keep a zone staffed is creating a safety problem and a pay problem at the same time.

12

Scheduling, Attendance & Punctuality

A live show cannot start with an empty position. Attendance is the single biggest factor in role assignment, rehire, and promotion here.

HOW SCHEDULING WORKS

- Schedules are published in Sithon. Check it — a schedule posted is a schedule communicated.
- Shifts are assigned by management based on operational need, training, role, and demonstrated reliability. Shift swapping between employees is not permitted.
- If you cannot work an assigned shift, contact your leader as early as possible so the shift can be reassigned by management.
- Availability changes go to your leader in writing, in advance — not the night of.
- Schedules shift with weather, ticket sales, and staffing. Expect changes and check official channels before every shift.

12

SHIFT STANDARD

- 1 **Arrive early**
Be on site at least 5 minutes before your scheduled start, in appropriate street clothing, and report to your leader.
- 2 **Clock in**
Every shift. No exceptions, no batching, no doing it for someone else.
- 3 **Be show-ready at start time**
Full costume and makeup complete at the designated start time, not beginning at it.
- 4 **Hold your position**
Remain in your assigned area until a leader dismisses you.
- 5 **Close out**
Costume returned, area reset, incident reports submitted before you leave.

ATTENDANCE STANDARDS

SITUATION	WHAT YOU MUST DO	CONSEQUENCE
Running late	Notify your leader as soon as you know	Repeated tardiness leads to corrective action under Section 35
Absence	Minimum 4 hours' notice except in a genuine emergency	Repeated absences lead to corrective action
Illness	Call out as early as possible — see Section 29	Calling out sick is not held against you; working sick is
No call / no show	Not acceptable under any circumstance	Grounds for immediate termination and treated as job abandonment

RELIABILITY IS REWARDED, AND WE MEAN IT

Attendance history is the first thing we look at when assigning lead roles, premium nights, and next-season offers. Willingness to work high-demand dates — the Fridays and Saturdays in October and the weekend before Halloween — is weighted heavily.

13

Time Off & Leaves of Absence

Most Southern Screams roles are seasonal and do not carry accrued paid leave. That does not mean there is no process.

REQUESTING TIME OFF

- Submit requests to your leader in writing as far ahead as possible. Requests during peak

13

operating dates are harder to approve and may be declined.

- Approved time off is unpaid unless your hire paperwork states otherwise.
- Do not assume a request is approved until a leader confirms it and it is reflected in Sithon.

PROTECTED AND STATUTORY LEAVE

Jury duty	Notify your leader as soon as you receive a summons and provide a copy. South Carolina law prohibits discharging or penalizing an employee for jury service. Time is unpaid unless otherwise required.
Military service	Leave and reinstatement rights are provided under USERRA. Give us as much advance notice as your orders allow.
Voting	South Carolina does not require employers to provide time off to vote, but we will work with you on shift timing during an election if you ask in advance.
Witness / court order	Time off is provided to comply with a subpoena or court order. Provide documentation.
Bereavement	Unpaid time off is available following the death of a family member. Tell your leader; we will not make you fight for it.
Family & medical leave	Southern Screams is generally below the employee threshold for FMLA coverage. If we become a covered employer, an FMLA policy will be issued and will control.
Workers' compensation	Absence connected to a work injury is handled under Section 27, not this section.

EXTENDED ABSENCE WITHOUT CONTACT

If you are away and cannot return as expected, stay in contact with your leader. An unexplained absence of two or more consecutive scheduled shifts without contact is treated as job abandonment under Section 36.

14

Perks, Discounts & Recognition

The pay is the pay, but the job comes with a few things worth having.

PERK	DETAIL
Event admission	Unlimited admission to Southern Screams events for yourself, subject to capacity and blackout dates.
Guest passes	Six guest passes to the Southern Screams Haunted House for the season.

14

PERK

DETAIL

Food & beverage	Discounted food and beverage at Holy City Brewing during the season. Alcohol purchases remain subject to Sections 19 and 20.
Gift shop	10% discount at the Southern Screams gift shop.
Merchandise	Southern Screams swag distributed periodically.
BooBucks referral	Refer a hire who completes a full season and earn entry into the referral drawing. Program terms are on the Scream Team Hub.
Wrap party	End-of-season celebration with awards, food, and the annual airing of grievances.
Team events	Team-building events and periodic team dinners across the season.

USING YOUR PERKS

Guest passes and admission are for you and your guests as a member of the team — they are not for resale. Selling or trading company passes is theft of company property under Section 35.

PART THREE

Conduct & Standards*How we behave on stage, backstage, online, and in front of a guest having a bad night.***15****Employee Expectations**

Safety	Follow every safety instruction. Report unsafe conditions immediately and directly. Never initiate contact with a guest. Horseplay, unauthorized prop use, and shortcuts around safety procedure can end your employment on the spot.
Professional behavior	Treat guests and coworkers with courtesy and respect at all times. Harassment, bullying, and discrimination are prohibited under Section 06.
Dependability	Arrive on time, work your scheduled shifts, and give your leader as much notice as you can when you cannot. Every absence lands on a teammate.
Role discipline	Follow costume and makeup direction. Stay in character in guest-facing areas. Use approved dialogue only.
Respect for property	Handle equipment, sets, props, and costumes with care. Report damage rather than hiding it — hiding it is the part that gets people fired.
Teamwork	Take direction from leads, help newer cast, and communicate openly. Teamwork makes the screams work.
Sober and fit for duty	Report to every shift rested, sober, and physically able to perform your assignment. See Section 19.

VIOLATIONS

Any violation of these expectations may result in corrective action up to and including immediate termination. See Section 35 for the process and for the list of offenses that skip it entirely.

16

Performer Conduct & the No-Touch Rule

The Scream Team is the product. Everything below exists so that 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, at 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. Initiating intentional 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 as a rule of conduct — 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 two things: 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 same night
Intentional	Full protocol below, incident report same night	Immediate termination

Incidental contact is 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 reflexively and lets go immediately.
- A guest brushes past you in a corridor that was built to be tight.
- A guest steadies themselves on you, a wall, or a prop.
- Your costume, cape, mask, or prop makes contact as you move past.

Intentional contact is deliberate, targeted, or continued after the moment has passed.

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

16

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 identical 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. Read the room — 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 required unless someone was hurt, nearly hurt, or complained.
- 4 Say so 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. Use the phrasing in Section 24.
- 4 Do not confront**
Never argue, never chase, never follow a guest through the attraction. Leadership and security handle it from there.
- 5 Write it up**
File an incident report before you leave for the night, while it is fresh. See Section 31.

IF YOU MAKE INCIDENTAL CONTACT WITH A GUEST

- 1 Stop and create space immediately**
- 2 Check on them**
Drop character long enough to ask if they are okay, in a plain voice. Then let them go.
- 3 Radio your leader**
Now, not at the end of the night.

16

4 File an incident report before you leave

Every time. Including when nobody was hurt and nobody was upset.

THIS IS NOT THE THING THAT 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 a different matter. 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 frames 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 Section 06.

PERFORMANCE STANDARDS

- Perform your assigned character as directed. Improvisation within your 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, do not visit friends in other zones, do not leave a position uncovered.
- Remain in your assigned area until dismissed directly by a leader.
- Maintain silence backstage during show hours. Sound bleed kills the scare in the room next door.
- 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 a guest is meant to walk in on — happens only where a leader has approved it, it has been rehearsed, and every performer in it has agreed to it.

- 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 permits contact with a guest, in any form, under any circumstances.
- Improvised physical contact with another performer in front of guests is not permitted, no matter how well the two of you know each other.

16

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, medically distressed, visibly intoxicated, or being pushed by their own group.

- Back off immediately and give them room. A guest in genuine distress is not a target.
- Signal a leader to escort 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, elderly 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.** For purposes of the no-touch rule, those are part of the guest's body.
- **Do not ask a guest about their disability,** and do not question or screen a service animal. If there is an issue, it goes to leadership. It is never yours to raise with a guest.
- **Give extra distance and a clear path by default.** Never scare into the path of travel of a guest using a mobility aid.
- **Pacing may need to open up behind them.** Radio ahead rather than compressing the interval to catch up.

GUEST COMMUNICATION

- Be courteous and professional out of character. Never argue with a guest — redirect to a leader.
- Correct guest behavior calmly and once, then escalate. You are not security.
- Never use phones or personal devices in costume or on set.
- Report any injury, costume malfunction, or show-affecting issue to your leader immediately.

SHOW READINESS

- Arrive with enough time for costume and makeup. Being in the chair at start time is being late.
- Hydrate before and during the shift. Warm up your voice — screaming cold is how people lose a week of work.
- Walk your zone before doors and check it for hazards, blocked exits, and burned-out lighting.

17

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 your assigned character. Do not trade zones, follow groups into the next room, or free-roam.
- Never break the flow of traffic. Do not block a doorway, a corridor, or a stair. A guest who cannot move forward is a crush risk.
- Never place yourself in a guest's path such that a recoil sends them into a wall, a step-down, or another guest. **Recoil is the single most common source of incidental contact in the building.** If your position produces 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 in your zone, radio it in rather than compressing the interval further.
- Watch for conga lines — groups grabbing shoulders and moving as a chain. A conga line falls as one unit. Break it verbally: "Single file, hands to yourself, keep moving."
- Watch for a group leaving someone behind. A separated guest alone in the dark is a Code Green waiting to happen. If the separated guest is a child, radio a leader immediately, stay with them, and hold your position — do not walk them forward or back on your own.
- 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 operated only by specifically trained and assigned performers. They are never pointed at a guest, never brought within arm's reach of a guest, and never run in a confined corridor.
- Kill any effect that malfunctions, block access to the area, and radio a leader. Do not attempt a repair during operating hours.
- Report fog fluid on flooring immediately. Fog residue plus a running guest is a fall.

DARKNESS & EGRESS

- Every performer carries or has immediate access to the assigned light source for their zone.
- Know the two nearest exits from your position and the path to each with the lights off. Walk it at Dress Rehearsal.

17

- Emergency exits, exit signage, and egress paths are never blocked, curtained over, obscured by fog output, or decorated in a way that hides them.
- On an evacuation call: house lights, plain voice, plain language. The show is over the instant a code is called.

WHEN TO RADIO A LEADER

Ejection decisions belong to leadership. Your job is to observe, disengage, and report. Call a leader for a guest who makes intentional contact with a performer, a prop, or a set piece; a guest who is intoxicated, aggressive, or threatening; a guest recording where recording is prohibited or using a light source that reveals the set; a guest who refuses to keep moving or attempts to re-enter a room; and a guest who brings in a weapon, a replica, or any prohibited item.

18

Wardrobe, Makeup & Special Effects

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

Assignment	Costumes are assigned by role. Do not alter, substitute, or omit any element without approval from your leader or the FX lead.
Condition	Report tears, broken fasteners, failing masks, and missing components 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 modify an application without approval — makeup design carries character continuity and photo standards.
Allergies	Notify leadership of 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. Half-costume in front of a guest breaks the show for everyone in the room.
Sightlines	If a mask, hood, or headpiece cuts your peripheral vision, tell the FX lead. Most employee-initiated incidental contact traces back to a performer who could not see the guest coming.
Personal items	Phones, bags, keys, and street clothes are never visible to guests. Use the storage provided.

18

Footwear

Closed-toe, secure, non-slip footwear at all times, including backstage. This one is not negotiable.

DRESSING ROOM STANDARDS

- Keep dressing areas and shared workspaces clean. Shared makeup and applicators are sanitized between uses.
- Dispose of trash in designated containers. No food or drink waste is left in dressing or set areas.
- Report hazards and damage in dressing areas to maintenance or a leader.
- Dressing rooms are private spaces. Photography, recording, and streaming in them are prohibited under Section 22.

DAMAGE AND LIABILITY

Ordinary wear, and damage that happens in the normal course of performing, is a company cost. Deliberate misuse or gross neglect is different — see Section 10 for how any reimbursement is handled and what we will not do.

19

Drug & Alcohol-Free Workplace

You must be sober, alert, and fit for duty at all times while working, in costume, on company property, or representing Southern Screams anywhere.

CATEGORY	POLICY
Illegal drugs	No possession, use, distribution, or being under the influence on company property or at any company event.
Cannabis	Prohibited. Cannabis is not legal for recreational use in South Carolina, and lawful use elsewhere does not authorize reporting to work impaired.
Alcohol	No consumption during a shift, in costume, or before a shift such that you report impaired. This includes employee discounts at the venue.
Reporting for duty	Never report under the influence. If you are unsure whether a medication or a night out has left you fit, call out instead of showing up.
Prescription medication	Notify leadership confidentially if a prescription may impair performance or safety. We will discuss accommodation under Section 05. You are not required to disclose your condition or diagnosis.
Tobacco & vaping	Designated outdoor areas only. Never in costume, never in view of guests, never near fog machines, pyrotechnic effects, or stored fuel.

19

TESTING

Southern Screams may conduct pre-employment, reasonable-suspicion, post-accident, and random drug and alcohol testing where permitted by law. Refusal to submit to a required test is treated as a positive result.

CONSEQUENCES

A violation of this section may result in immediate termination. If you are struggling with substance use, coming to leadership before it becomes a performance or safety incident gives us room to help you find resources. Coming to us after does not.

20

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 to 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 their 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 consume alcohol in costume or in any guest-visible area, on or off the clock, on an operating night.
- Underage employees do not handle alcohol containers in any capacity.
- You do not scare a guest holding an open drink. A startle reflex with a glass in hand is a laceration, and spilled alcohol on a dark floor is the next guest's fall. If a position cannot be worked without reaching through, over, or 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 place 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 or removal.
- 4 Never physically intervene**
Except to remove yourself or another employee from immediate danger. You are not security and you have no authority to restrain a guest.

20

5 Document it

Any incident involving an impaired guest gets an incident report before you leave.

DO NOT SERVE OR REFUSE SERVICE ON THE VENUE'S BEHALF

Decisions about serving, refusing, or cutting off a guest belong to the licensed venue and its staff. Never tell a guest they can or cannot be served, and never speculate to a guest about someone's intoxication. Route it to your leader.

21

Personal Phone & Social Media Use

PHONES ON SHIFT

- Phones stay silenced and stored during your shift. Not in a costume pocket, not tucked in a prop.
- No phone use in guest-facing areas or in costume, for any reason.
- Personal calls happen on an approved break, away from sets and guest sightlines.
- If you have a caregiving situation that requires reachability, tell your leader and we will arrange a contact path.

POSTING ABOUT WORK

- Do not post behind-the-scenes content, set photos, character reveals, or unreleased concepts without approval. Reveals are marketing decisions with money attached.
- Do not post images or information about guests. Ever.
- If you post promotional content for us or receive anything of value for a post, disclose the relationship clearly — for example "I work at Southern Screams" or a clear #ad tag. This is an FTC requirement, not a company preference.
- Do not present yourself as speaking for Southern Screams. Media requests go to leadership under Section 22.
- Do not harass, demean, or target coworkers, leaders, or guests online. Section 06 does not stop at the property line.

WHAT THIS POLICY DOES NOT COVER

Nothing in this section restricts your right to discuss your wages, hours, or working conditions, to talk with coworkers about improving them, or to communicate with a government agency. See Section 03. This policy is about protecting show secrets and guest privacy — not about keeping you quiet.

22

Confidentiality, Creative Property & Media

We spend the off-season building surprises. Protecting them is part of the job.

WHAT IS CONFIDENTIAL

CATEGORY

EXAMPLES

Creative content	Scripts, character designs, storylines, scare sequences, season themes, and unreleased concepts.
Technical assets	Set layouts, lighting and audio rigs, effect mechanisms, triggers, and build methods.
Business information	Financials, ticketing data, vendor terms, sponsorship arrangements, and marketing plans.
Guest information	Guest names, images, contact information, and anything connected to a guest incident.
Personnel information	Another employee's personal information, medical information, or discipline record.

WAGES AND WORKING CONDITIONS ARE NOT CONFIDENTIAL

Schedules, internal announcements, and the fact of your own employment terms are not covered by this policy. You may always discuss your pay, hours, and working conditions with coworkers or anyone else. See Section 03.

CREATIVE CONTRIBUTIONS

Performers and crew invent things here — bits, lines, character backstories, makeup designs, set details, effect solutions. To the extent any of it is created within the scope of your employment and using company resources, it is work made for hire and belongs to Southern Screams, LLC, and you assign any rights that do not vest automatically. Your signed Employment and Confidentiality Agreements are the controlling documents on this point.

This does not reach work you make on your own time, on your own equipment, and unrelated to our business. If you are unsure which side of that line something falls on, ask before you use it.

MEDIA & PRESS

- Direct all press inquiries to leadership without comment. "I'm not the right person, let me get someone" is a complete answer.
- Never confirm, deny, or speculate publicly about a guest incident, an injury, or an investigation — including in comments, replies, and DMs.
- Do not record, photograph, or livestream inside production areas, dressing rooms, command posts, or anywhere schedules and guest information are visible.
- Personal photos backstage are permitted during non-operational hours with approval and never in guest-facing zones.

22

AFTER YOU LEAVE

Confidentiality obligations survive the end of your employment. Return every physical and digital company asset before your final shift ends.

23

Outside Employment & Conflicts of Interest

We are a seasonal employer and we expect you to have other work. A few situations still need a conversation.

DISCLOSE THESE

- Employment, contracting, or volunteering with another haunted attraction, escape room, immersive event, or laser tag operation in our market during our operating season.
- Any role where you would be asked about our sets, effects, pricing, staffing, or creative plans.
- A financial interest in, or family relationship with, a Southern Screams vendor, supplier, or venue.
- A romantic or family relationship with someone you supervise or who supervises you. This is not prohibited — it is a scheduling and reporting-line question we need to solve openly.
- Any outside work that would leave you unable to meet the attendance standard in Section 12.

WHAT WE WILL AND WILL NOT DO

We will	Keep the disclosure confidential, adjust reporting lines where needed, and in most cases approve it and move on.
We will not	Restrict your ability to earn a living outside our season, tell you where you may work in the off-season, or dictate your personal relationships.
We will act on	Use of our confidential material for a competitor, recruiting our cast for a competing attraction during our season, or steering a company purchase toward someone you have an undisclosed interest in.

24

Communication Channels & Radio Protocol**OFFICIAL CHANNELS**

CHANNEL	PURPOSE
Your leader / lead	Daily operations, shift-specific direction, immediate issues.
Leadership	Escalated concerns, pay, policy questions, harassment reports, and anything you do not want to raise with your direct leader.
Sithon	Schedules and shift assignments. Check before every shift.
Email & announcements	Season updates, schedule and weather notices. Check frequently — silence is not permission.

24

CHANNEL	PURPOSE
Scream Team Hub	Handbook, training material, safety procedures, forms, and the BooBucks program at southernscreams.com/screamteam .
Bulletin boards	Backstage postings, call sheets, and notices.
Facebook group	Optional company-owned group for team news and culture. Keep it professional; Sections 06 and 21 apply.

RADIO PROTOCOL

- The radio is an operations channel, not a social one. Keep it clear.
- Identify yourself and your location first, then state the issue. "Line queue, need a leader" beats a paragraph.
- Emergency codes take absolute priority. When a code is called, everyone else stops transmitting until leadership gives the All Clear.
- Never use a guest's name, description, or medical information on an open channel. When a child is separated from their group, describe them by age, height, and clothing only — never by name.
- Never discuss an incident, an injury, or another employee's discipline over radio.
- If your radio fails, tell the nearest leader immediately — a dead radio in a scare zone is an unstaffed position.

EMERGENCY COMMUNICATION

In an emergency, direction comes from in-person announcements, radio, text alerts, and designated safety personnel — in that order of authority. Staying reachable and informed during a shift is your responsibility. Section 25 covers the codes themselves.

PART FOUR

Safety & Emergencies

The section with the highest stakes. Read it twice; you will be quizzed on it.

25

Safety & Emergency Protocols

Safety is everyone's responsibility and everyone's authority. Any employee may call a code. Nobody will ever be disciplined for calling one in good faith.

EMERGENCY CODES

Codes are announced on the radio three times, followed by your location. The tear-out quick reference at the back of this handbook carries the same information.

CODE	MEANS	YOUR FIRST ACTION
CODE RED	Fire or smoke	Announce three times with your location. Attempt to extinguish only if trained and safe to do so. Evacuate guests calmly to marked exits and go to the muster point.
CODE GREEN	Medical emergency	Announce three times with your location. Do not move the injured person unless they are in immediate danger. Render first aid only if trained. Clear space around them and send someone out to guide EMS in.
ALL CLEAR	Situation resolved	Announced by leadership only. Nothing resumes — not the show, not group releases, not the queue — until you hear it.

EVACUATION IS CALLED IN PLAIN LANGUAGE

"Emergency, emergency, emergency" with house lights up. We use codes for situations we do not want to broadcast to a room full of guests. An evacuation is the opposite — we want every guest to understand instantly and start moving.

A CHILD SEPARATED FROM THEIR GROUP

We do not use a code for this. It is called in plain language on the radio, and it outranks everything except a Code Red or a Code Green already in progress.

1

Say it plainly

Radio your leader: "Separated child," your location, and the child's approximate age, height, and clothing. Never a name over open radio.

2

Stay with the child

If the child is with you, hold your position and keep them with you. Do not walk them through the attraction, and do not hand them to a guest who says they know them.

25

3 Leaders hold the exits

Leadership covers the entrance, the exit, and the queue. Nobody is released from a zone and no group is dispatched until a leader says so.

4 Search your own zone only

Check hiding spots, corners, and low clearances in your assigned area. Do not leave your zone to search — an unstaffed zone makes the search harder, not faster.

5 Wait for the all-clear

Normal pacing resumes only when leadership confirms the child is back with their party. File an incident report before you leave.

ANYONE CAN CALL A CODE

You do not need permission and you do not need to be certain. A code called on a situation that turns out to be nothing costs the show a few minutes. A code that goes uncalled costs something else. No one here has ever been disciplined for calling a code in good faith, and no one ever will be.

EVERY SHIFT, EVERY EMPLOYEE

- Know the two nearest exits to your position before doors open. Not one. Two.
- Know where the nearest first aid kit and fire extinguisher are.
- Know the muster point for the team.
- Report hazards and unsafe behavior immediately — to a leader, not to a coworker.
- Wear proper footwear and attire. Follow lifting and movement protocols for heavy props.
- Participate in every drill and safety session. Attendance is mandatory and recorded.

EVACUATION**1 Drop character completely**

Full house lights and a normal speaking voice. Guests must understand instantly that this is real.

2 Direct, do not touch

Use clear verbal direction and open-hand gestures. The no-touch rule holds during evacuation except to prevent immediate harm.

3 Sweep your zone

Check hiding spots, corners, and restrooms in your area if it is safe to do so. Report your zone clear.

4 Muster and count

Go to the designated point. Do not leave the property until leadership has accounted for the team.

5 Do not re-enter

For any reason, including personal belongings, until leadership gives the All Clear.

25

SITUATION

WHAT TO DO

Power outage	Stay calm, hold guests in place, use your assigned light source, and wait for direction. Do not begin an evacuation on your own.
Medical event or emergency	Code Green. Clear space around them, do not crowd, assign someone to meet EMS at the entrance.
Separated child	Call it in plain language with age, height, and clothing. Stay with the child if they are with you. Search your own zone only — do not leave your position.
Structural or prop failure	Stop traffic through the area immediately, hold position, and radio a leader. Do not attempt repairs mid-show.
Effect malfunction	Kill the effect at the local control if you were trained on it. Otherwise radio it in and block access.

26

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.

GENERAL RULES

- Never alter, relocate, or repurpose a prop without leader approval.
- Do not climb, lean on, sit on, or hang from set pieces, walls, or scaffolding.
- Use fog, haze, strobe, air cannons, and lighting effects only as trained and only at assigned settings.
- Report broken props, exposed fasteners, loose flooring, and damaged scenery immediately — then block the hazard until it is addressed.
- Emergency exits and egress paths are never blocked, decorated over, or obscured by a prop, cable, or fog line.

ACTOR-SPECIFIC

- Memorize your zone, your path, and your blind spots. Walk them with lights on before every operating night.
- Know where the tight corners, uneven flooring, low clearances, and step-downs are in your area.
- Never place yourself where a startled guest's natural recoil sends them into a wall, a step, or another guest.
- Never jump out into a guest's path of travel in a way that could cause a collision or a fall.

26

CREW & BUILD

- Wear appropriate 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. Minors do not use them at all.
- Label and store paint, adhesives, fuel, and fog fluid safely and away from public areas and ignition sources.
- Never work alone on an overhead rig, a lift, or an electrical modification.

27

Employee Injury & Workers' Compensation

If you get hurt at work, the process is short and it starts with telling someone.

WHAT TO DO

- 1 **Get safe and get care**
Stop what you are doing. For anything beyond a minor scrape, call a Code Green or have someone call it for you.
- 2 **Report it to a leader immediately**
The same shift, before you leave — even if you think it is minor and even if you want to finish the night. Injuries that seem minor at 11 p.m. often are not at 7 a.m.
- 3 **Complete an injury report**
Your leader will complete the employee injury report with you and route it to leadership.
- 4 **Follow up on treatment**
If the injury requires medical care beyond first aid, leadership will direct you on the workers' compensation process and provider.
- 5 **Stay in contact**
If you need time away to recover, keep your leader informed. See Section 13.

REPORT WITHIN THE DEADLINE

South Carolina law requires an employee to give notice of a work-related injury to the employer within 90 days, and to file any claim within the statutory period. Late notice can cost you benefits. Report the same day — it costs you nothing and protects everything.

OUR COMMITMENTS

- We maintain workers' compensation coverage as required by South Carolina law.
- We will not retaliate against you for reporting a work injury or filing a claim. Retaliation of that kind is unlawful and is a terminable offense here.
- We will look at what caused it. Injury reports feed directly into set changes, staffing changes, and training changes.
- Reporting an injury does not count against your attendance record.

27

GUESTS ARE DIFFERENT

A guest injury is documented under Section 31 as an incident report. An employee injury is documented here. If both happen in one event, both reports are completed.

28

Weather & Outdoor Working Conditions

An October night in Charleston can be humid at doors and cold by close. Many positions are outdoors or in unconditioned space, in a full costume, for hours.

CONDITION	GUIDANCE
Heat & humidity	Hydrate before and throughout the shift. Take shade and rest breaks. Wear breathable base layers. Leaders monitor performers in full masks and heavy costumes and rotate them out.
Cold & wet	Layer under your costume. Waterproof footwear and outerwear encouraged. Tell a leader if you lose feeling in your hands or feet.
Rain	Watch for slick flooring, dripping electrical, and cable runs. Report standing water near any powered effect immediately.
Lightning	Outdoor positions are pulled when lightning is within the operating threshold. Do not wait to be told twice.
Severe weather	Operations may pause or close. Hold guests in place, await direction from leadership, and move to shelter only when instructed.

IF YOU FEEL UNWELL, STOP

Notify a leader immediately if you feel faint, dizzy, nauseated, overheated, confused, or unable to catch your breath. No performance standard, no queue length, and no staffing shortage is worth your health. A leader who pressures someone to stay in position after they report a heat or cold symptom has committed a serious policy violation.

29

Illness & Contagious Disease

We work in close quarters, share makeup chairs and masks, and breathe hard for five hours. Illness moves fast through a cast.

29

SITUATION	REQUIRED ACTION
Sick before your shift	Stay home. Contact your leader as early as you can through normal call-out procedure.
Symptoms during a shift	Report to a leader immediately. You may be sent home. This is not a disciplinary action.
Fever, vomiting, or diarrhea	Do not report to work until symptom-free for at least 24 hours without medication.
Prevention on site	Wash hands frequently, use sanitizer stations, sanitize shared tools, brushes, and costume pieces between uses.
Public health guidance	Mask, testing, and exclusion practices follow current local, state, and federal guidance and may change during a season.

CALLING OUT SICK IS THE RIGHT CALL

Calling out because you are contagious is not an attendance problem. Showing up contagious and taking out four cast members before the weekend is. We would rather run one position short for a night.

30

Weapons & Workplace Violence**WEAPONS**

- Employees may not carry, store, or possess a firearm or other weapon on their person, in a costume, or in any work area, at any Southern Screams event or venue, except as expressly permitted by law.
- Prop weapons are company property, are approved individually, and never leave the prop inventory. Personal knives, replicas, and personally supplied props are prohibited.
- Tools are tools. Carrying a work tool as a costume element or a scare device is prohibited.
- Third-party venue rules may be stricter than ours. Where they are, follow the stricter rule.

VIOLENCE AND THREATS

Threats, intimidation, physical aggression, and violence — toward a coworker, a leader, a guest, or a vendor — result in immediate termination and, where appropriate, referral to law enforcement. This includes conditional and joking threats.

IF A SITUATION ESCALATES

- 1 Disengage**
Leave the interaction. Do not attempt to win it.

30

- 2 Create distance and cover**
Move guests and yourself away from the person, toward an exit.
- 3 Get leadership on the radio**
State your location and that you need a leader immediately. Do not describe the situation over open radio beyond what leadership needs to respond.
- 4 Call 911**
Any employee may call 911. You never need permission first, and you will never be second-guessed for it.
- 5 Do not restrain anyone**
You have no authority to detain, restrain, or pursue a guest. Physical intervention is limited to removing yourself or another person from immediate danger.

PERSONAL SAFETY CONCERNS

If a personal situation — including a protective order, a stalking situation, or domestic violence — could follow you to work, tell leadership in confidence. We can adjust your position, your parking, your published schedule, and your walk-out procedure. We would much rather know.

31

Guest Complaints & Incident Reports

HANDLING A COMPLAINT

- 1 Listen without interrupting**
Give the guest your full attention and stay calm. Most complaints de-escalate simply by being heard.
- 2 Empathize, do not assign blame**
Never blame another employee, another department, or the guest. Never speculate about what happened.
- 3 Do not over-promise**
Never promise a refund, a comp, or a specific outcome you are not authorized to deliver.
- 4 Solve or escalate**
If it is within your authority, fix it. If it is not, get a leader immediately rather than negotiating.
- 5 Document it**
Escalated complaints get an incident report the same night.

WHEN AN INCIDENT REPORT IS REQUIRED

- Any guest injury, however minor, including one the guest declines treatment for.
- Any medical emergency or Code Green, and any child separated from their group.
- Any near miss — a guest who almost fell, an effect that almost struck someone, a prop that gave way.
- **Any intentional contact by a guest** with an employee, a prop, or a set piece.

31

- **Any contact initiated by an employee**, including incidental contact where no one was hurt.
- **Any incidental guest-initiated contact** that caused an injury, a near miss, or a complaint.
- Any allegation by a guest against an employee.
- Any ejection, refusal of entry, or law enforcement involvement.
- Any property damage, lost or found valuable, or vehicle incident.

INCIDENTAL CONTACT STILL GETS TRACKED

Guest-initiated incidental contact that does not require a report is still reported to your leader verbally, and leaders log it by zone. Three in the same zone in one season is a set change, not a coaching conversation.

WRITING IT

Facts only	What you saw and heard, in order. No conclusions, no diagnosis, no opinions about fault.
Specifics	Names, times, exact location, lighting and weather conditions, who else was present, what was said.
Same night	Reports are submitted before you leave the property. Memory degrades and a late report reads as a reconstructed one.
Never speculate	Do not write "they were probably drunk" or "the prop must have failed." Write what you observed.
No apology of fault	Be kind to the guest and never state or imply that Southern Screams was at fault. Sympathy is fine; admissions are not yours to make.
Confidential	Do not discuss the incident with anyone outside leadership — not with other cast, not online, not with the guest afterward.

32

Parking, Transportation & After-Hours Safety**RULE****DETAIL**

Designated parking	Park only in employee-designated areas. Guest spaces fill early on peak nights — arrive with time.
Emergency lanes	Never block fire lanes, emergency exits, dumpster access, or guest paths.
Vehicle security	Lock your vehicle and take valuables with you. Southern Screams is not liable for loss or theft from a personal vehicle.
Carpooling	Encouraged on high-volume nights to reduce congestion.

32

RULE

DETAIL

Buddy system	Walk out with at least one other person after close. Leaders are responsible for confirming no one is walking out alone.
Minors	No employee under 18 is left waiting alone for a ride. A leader stays until they are picked up.
Impairment	If you are not safe to drive home for any reason, tell a leader. We will help you arrange a ride. This will not be held against you.

33

Lost & Found

You find an item	Turn it in to the Lost and Found station immediately. Notify a leader directly for wallets, phones, keys, medication, or anything of obvious value.
You lose an item	Report it to your leader as soon as you notice and check Lost and Found at end of shift.
A guest reports a loss	Notify a leader. Take a description and contact details. Never promise a guest their item will be found.
Holding period	Unclaimed items are held for the period set by leadership and then disposed of or donated.
Liability	Southern Screams is not responsible for personal items left unsecured by employees or guests.

PART FIVE

Records, Discipline & Separation

How we keep your information, how we correct problems, and how employment ends.

34

Personnel Records & Changes

KEEP US CURRENT

Update leadership in writing within five days of any change to your legal name, address, phone number, email address, emergency contact, direct deposit information, or driver's license status if you drive for the company. A payroll problem or a missed emergency call is almost always an out-of-date record.

HOW WE HANDLE YOUR INFORMATION

- Personnel records are confidential and are accessed only by those with a legitimate business need.
- Medical information, including accommodation documentation and injury records, is kept separately from your general personnel file.
- We do not disclose your personal information to other employees or to guests.
- Reference requests are routed to leadership. As a general practice we confirm dates of employment and position held.
- You may request to review your own personnel file; arrange it with leadership in advance.

35

Disciplinary Policy

Discipline here is corrective. The goal is to fix the behavior and keep the person — right up until the point that stops being possible.

PROGRESSIVE STEPS

- 1 Verbal warning**
Direct feedback and a coaching note. Developmental, not punitive. Documented internally.
- 2 Written warning**
Formal documentation of the issue with clear, specific expectations and a timeframe for improvement.
- 3 Final warning or suspension**
Last opportunity to correct. May include unpaid suspension from scheduled shifts.
- 4 Termination**
Employment ends.

35

THIS SEQUENCE IS NOT A GUARANTEE

Southern Screams may begin corrective action at any step, repeat a step, skip steps entirely, or move directly to termination based on the seriousness of the conduct, the circumstances, and the employee's record. Nothing in this section creates a right to progressive discipline, a right to warnings before termination, or any contract of employment. Employment remains at-will.

IMMEDIATE TERMINATION OFFENSES

The following ordinarily result in termination without progressive discipline:

No call / no show	Initiating intentional contact with a guest
Physical violence or threats	Theft, including selling company passes
Intentional property damage	Being impaired on the job
Harassment or discrimination	Retaliation against a reporter
Falsifying time or company records	Insubordination on a safety instruction
Blocking or disabling an emergency exit	Bringing a weapon onto the property
Recording in a dressing room	Leaving an assigned position unstaffed without notice
Concealing contact with a guest	Discouraging someone from reporting contact

YOUR SIDE OF IT

- You will be told what the concern is, specifically, and given a chance to respond before a decision is finalized where circumstances allow.
- You may add a written statement to any disciplinary document. Signing one means you received it, not that you agree with it.
- If you believe discipline was unfair, discriminatory, or retaliatory, raise it with leadership under Section 06. That is a protected report.

36

Resignation & Termination

TYPE	PROCESS	NOTES
Voluntary resignation	Provide at least 72 hours' notice in writing to your leader	Return all company property before your final shift ends. Notice is requested, not required — employment is at-will.
Job abandonment	Two consecutive scheduled shifts missed without contact, or a no call / no show	Treated as a voluntary resignation effective the first missed shift.
Involuntary termination	For policy violation, performance, or misconduct	Reason communicated at the time. Final pay issued as below.
End of season	Seasonal employment concludes at the end of the event season	Not a termination for cause and does not affect rehire eligibility.
Rehire eligibility	Determined by performance, attendance, conduct, and reason for departure	Termination for cause generally makes an individual ineligible.

FINAL PAY

South Carolina requires that wages due be paid within 48 hours of separation or by the next regular payday, not exceeding thirty days. Southern Screams follows that requirement. Your final payment is issued through the same method as your regular pay unless you request otherwise in writing.

RETURN OF PROPERTY

- Costumes, masks, props, and any FX components issued to you
- Radios, lights, keys, badges, and access credentials
- Any company device, printed material, script, map, or schedule
- Anything containing confidential information as defined in Section 22

WHAT SURVIVES YOUR LAST SHIFT

Confidentiality and creative property obligations under Section 22, and any obligations in your signed Employment and Confidentiality Agreements, continue after your employment ends.

AT-WILL EMPLOYMENT

All employment with Southern Screams, LLC is at-will. Either you or the company may end the employment relationship at any time, with or without cause and with or without prior notice. No statement in this handbook, in any training, or by any leader alters that. Only a written agreement signed by an authorized officer of Southern Screams, LLC may do so.

Emergency Quick Reference

CODE RED

FIRE OR SMOKE

- 1 Announce "Code Red" three times on the radio with your location.
- 2 Attempt to extinguish only if you are trained and it is safe to do so.
- 3 House lights, plain voice. Evacuate guests to the nearest marked exit.
- 4 Sweep your zone if safe, report it clear, and go to the muster point.

CODE GREEN

MEDICAL EMERGENCY

- 1 Announce "Code Green" three times on the radio with your location.
- 2 Do not move the injured person unless they are in immediate danger.
- 3 Render 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 — show, queue, or releases — until you hear it.

SEPARATED CHILD — NO CODE, PLAIN LANGUAGE

- Radio "Separated child," your location, and 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 — do not leave your position.
- Normal pacing resumes only on the all-clear. Incident report before you leave.

CONTACT WITH A GUEST

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

- Create space and reset. Stay in character if it is safe.
- Tell your leader at break or at close.
- No report unless someone was hurt, nearly hurt, or upset.

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

- Break contact and step back. Do not push, grab, or retaliate.
- Drop the scare. Character is over.
- Radio your leader with your location. Do not confront or follow.
- Incident report before you leave.

IF YOU MADE THE CONTACT — even by accident

- Stop, create space, check on them in a plain voice.
- Radio it in now. Incident report before you leave. Every time.

NOT SURE WHICH IT WAS? REPORT IT.

BEFORE DOORS, EVERY NIGHT

- ☐ Two nearest exits from my position — walked with the lights off
- ☐ Nearest first aid kit and fire extinguisher
- ☐ Muster point for the team
- ☐ Radio works and is on the right channel
- ☐ Zone walked with lights on — no new hazards, exits clear, props reset

NEVER INITIATE CONTACT · 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.

Contacts

Fill this in at Orientation and keep it with your quick reference card.

Emergency	911 — always first for fire, medical, or threat
Leader on duty	Any leader present that night
Leadership	leadership@southernscreams.com
Harassment reports	See Section 06 — any leader, or leadership directly
Payroll questions	Contact Nate
Scream Team Hub	southernscreams.com/screamteam
Scheduling	Sithon — login created at Application
Payroll system	ADP — login sent to your email

MEDIA & LIKENESS RELEASE

Southern Screams photographs and films on site for promotional, archival, and training purposes. Because implied consent is not sufficient for commercial use, we ask for it expressly.

I grant Southern Screams, LLC and its authorized agents the irrevocable right to photograph, film, and record me, and to use, reproduce, publish, and distribute my name, image, likeness, voice, and performance — in whole or in part, in any medium now known or later developed — for advertising, marketing, promotional, editorial, archival, and training purposes, without further notice, approval, or compensation. I waive any right to inspect or approve the finished product and release Southern Screams, LLC from any claim arising from such use, including claims of defamation, invasion of privacy, or right of publicity.

This release does not apply to recordings made in dressing rooms or other private areas, which are prohibited under Section 22.

EMPLOYEE SIGNATURE

DATE

PRINTED NAME

POSITION / ROLE

If the employee is under 18, a parent or legal guardian must also sign.

PARENT / GUARDIAN SIGNATURE (IF UNDER 18)

DATE

SIGN AND RETURN

Acknowledgment of Receipt

Initial each item, then sign below. Return this page to your leader before your first scheduled shift. Returning employees complete a new acknowledgment each season, including returning employees.

INITIAL

I have received, read, and understand the Southern Screams Haunted House Employee Handbook, 2026 season edition, version 2026.2.

INITIAL

I understand the **no-touch rule** in Section 16: I will never initiate physical contact with a guest, and I understand that doing so intentionally may result in immediate termination.

INITIAL

I understand the difference between **intentional and incidental contact**, how to respond to each, and that any contact I initiate — including contact I did not intend — must be reported the same night.

INITIAL

I understand **Code Red and Code Green** in Section 25 and my obligation to know my two nearest exits, my nearest first aid kit and extinguisher, and my muster point before every shift.

INITIAL

I understand the **reporting channels** in Section 06, that they cover harassment by guests and vendors as well as coworkers, and that I may report to any leader without retaliation.

INITIAL

I understand my obligation to **report any work injury the same day** it occurs, as described in Section 27.

INITIAL

I understand my employment is **at-will**, that this handbook is not a contract of employment, and that no leader has authority to promise otherwise.

INITIAL

I understand that Southern Screams may revise this handbook at any time, and that the version posted to the Scream Team Hub is the controlling version.

INITIAL

I agree to seek clarification from a leader on anything in this handbook I do not understand, rather than assuming.

 EMPLOYEE SIGNATURE

 DATE

 PRINTED NAME

 POSITION / ROLE

 PARENT / GUARDIAN SIGNATURE (IF UNDER 18)

 DATE