

*Student*  
**HANDBOOK**

*65 years of being*

# THE CHANGE





## Table of Contents

<b>About Chicago Children's Choir</b>	3
<b>Core Values</b>	4
<b>Ensembles</b>	5
<b>Auditions</b>	7
<b>Online Programming</b>	8
<b>Performances and Events</b>	9
<b>Tours and Special Projects</b>	10
<b>Assessments</b>	10
<b>Singer Policies</b>	11
Attendance Policy	
Tardy Policy	
Materials and Preparation	
Uniform	
Performance Appearance	
Drop-Off and Pick-Up	
Medication and Allergies	
<b>Singer Conduct, Expectations and Discipline</b>	14
Behavior and Expectations	
Disciplinary Measures	
<b>Safe Environment</b>	16
Health Guidelines	
Harassment	
Sexual Harassment	
Child Safety Reporting	
Diversity Statement	
<b>Fees and Deposits</b>	20
<b>Family Involvement</b>	21
<b>Staff List</b>	23

## About Chicago Children's Choir

**OUR MISSION IS TO INSPIRE AND CHANGE LIVES THROUGH MUSIC.**

**We are a non-profit organization that inspires and unites youth from diverse backgrounds to become global citizens through music.**

Founded in Hyde Park in direct response to the Civil Rights Movement in 1956, Chicago Children's Choir (CCC) has grown from one choir into a vast network of in-school and after-school programs driven by one mission: **to inspire and change lives through music**. CCC has impacted the lives of more than 50,000 diverse youth throughout its 65-year history.

Since its founding, CCC has focused on building programs that reflect the racial and economic diversity of Chicago. Eighty percent of youth served are from low-moderate income homes and participate completely free of charge. High school seniors enrolled in CCC have a 100 percent graduation rate, becoming global ambassadors who carry on CCC's core values in a wide array of professional fields.

Under the leadership of President Josephine Lee, Chicago Children's Choir has achieved new heights and revolutionized the youth choral arts through innovative creative partnerships and new artistic endeavors.

The Choir collaborated with GRAMMY Award-winning music director and producer Peter CottonTale on his original song "Together" for Google's 2020 Year in Search video, which went viral with more than 240 million views. Other recent projects include the 2020 PBS national broadcast of the new staged production of Leonard Bernstein's *MASS* under the direction of Marin Alsop in July 2018 and 2019 with two frequent creative partners: the Chicago Symphony Orchestra and Ravinia Festival; Lyric Opera's production of *Dead Man Walking* and Tchaikovsky's romantic thriller *The Queen of Spades* with select Chicago Children's Choir singers cast as the children's chorus.

In the past few years, the Choir played a core role in bringing to life the world-premiere hip-hop musical *Long Way Home*, written and directed by the renowned Q Brothers Collective, which played to five sold-out houses in 2018 and was subsequently released as a one-of-a-kind album in 2021. CCC has been a frequent collaborator with Chance the Rapper, most recently on his critically-acclaimed directorial debut, *Magnificent Coloring World* (2021), as well as on his debut studio album *The Big Day* (2019) and his GRAMMY Award-winning *Coloring Book* (2016) studio recording and tour performances.

CCC has served as a model for youth choirs across the country including Boston Children's Chorus, Denver Children's Choir, and Indianapolis Children's Choir.

## Core Values

### **Education | Expression | Excellence | Equity | Empathy**

*Education:* Through quality music education, Chicago Children's Choir inspires youth to develop a curious, active mind for lifelong learning and appreciation of history and diverse cultures.

*Expression:* Chicago Children's Choir inspires youth to authentically represent music of a variety of cultures, connecting with others through thoughtful and intentional use of musical and personal expression.

*Excellence:* Chicago Children's Choir inspires youth to maintain a high level of excellence, allowing them to perform and conduct themselves with pride and respect that shows itself in performance and their personal lives through civil service and community involvement.

*Equity:* Chicago Children's Choir fosters an environment of accessibility, anti-racism, and thoughtful inclusion, ensuring that each singer has what they need to find success and community through our programs.

*Empathy:* Chicago Children's Choir centers a repertoire that represents a wide array of cultures, languages, and racial backgrounds, encouraging singers to practice regularly reflecting on the experience and feelings of others.

## Ensembles

Singers interested in participating in Chicago Children's Choir may audition beginning at age eight when entering third grade. Through a tiered structure, CCC offers singers the opportunity to participate through various stages of vocal and social development and ability. This structure also presents singers with the potential for growth as they continue their journey.

### School Choirs

Singers enrolled in the School Program receive classroom training in basic music theory and choral performance from professional music educators. Singers in this program have the opportunity to explore the expressive qualities of music while developing a sense of self-discipline, pride and intercultural understanding.

School partners are asked to pay a fee for the 30-week program, allowing the students to participate tuition-free. All programs are heavily discounted through the generosity of individuals, corporations, and foundations, allowing us to remove a financial barrier to participation.

### Neighborhood Choirs

The Neighborhood Choir program provides beginning and intermediate choral training through after-school programs in twelve Chicago neighborhoods:

Albany Park, Austin, Beverly, Bucktown, Englewood, Gage Park (new!), Garfield Park/Off the Street Club, Humboldt Park, Hyde Park, Lincoln Park/DePaul, Pilsen/Little Village and Rogers Park

At the Neighborhood Choir level, singers learn proper vocal technique, music reading, and sight singing skills, as well as the discipline of singing with musicality, movement, and expression. Neighborhood Choir programs offer a well-rounded experience that includes up to two ensemble rehearsals per week. They may have numerous performance opportunities in their communities and throughout Chicago each year.

Newer Neighborhood Choir programs begin with one ensemble and as enrollment grows, the following levels are added.

**Allegro:** The beginning level of the Neighborhood Choir that builds the foundation for further growth within CCC.

**Vivace:** The intermediate level of the Neighborhood Choir that focuses on more advanced vocal technique, movement, music theory, and repertoire.

**Presto:** This ensemble allows advanced singers to continue their musical advancement with more challenging repertoire and a continued focus on music theory.

**CCC has a long-standing commitment to serving children and families regardless of their financial situation. Neighborhood Choir tuition is based on a sliding scale according to family income ranging from \$6/month to \$200/month.**

### Dimension

Dimension is a unique ensemble for singers approximately ages eleven and up who are beginning or adjusting to the vocal transition into tenor, baritone, and bass voices. This ensemble offers many performance opportunities independently and with other Chicago Children's Choir programs.

Training and repertoire are specifically designed to guide these singers through the vocal transition, while learning to sing a diverse repertoire with musicality, movement, and expression.

CCC has a long-standing commitment to serving children and families regardless of their financial situation. Dimension tuition is based on a sliding scale according to family income ranging from \$6/month to \$200/month.

### **Voice of Chicago**

Voice of Chicago (VOC) is the premier, city-wide ensemble of Chicago Children's Choir. About 95 percent of all Voice of Chicago singers advance from other CCC programs. This ensemble maintains an extensive performance schedule that includes touring and collaborations with Chicago's finest cultural institutions. The group includes high school age participants of all voice types.

1. *Promotees*  
New singers to Voice of Chicago. They have additional rehearsals on Saturday mornings at the beginning of the fall semester. Promotees will often not perform until they have had time to learn repertoire and become acclimated into this high level performing ensemble.
2. *Core*  
Voice of Chicago singers who participate at its most basic level. This is the majority of Voice of Chicago singers who are not also a part of smaller select performance ensembles (Encore or Groove).
3. *Encore*  
A select, mixed ensemble. Singers are selected through an audition process; this ensemble represents the most advanced performers and musicians. Participants are expected to commit to a more rigorous rehearsal and performance schedule.
4. *Groove*  
A dance ensemble selected by audition. This group performs more difficult choreography which is used to enhance VOC repertoire. Groove has an additional rehearsal schedule.
5. *Singers Council*  
A group of Voice of Chicago members elected by the singers to represent the ensemble and support CCC activities. They represent Voice of Chicago in a variety of ways including, but not limited to, assisting Promotees, creating ice breakers at social activities, speaking on behalf of the Choir in a variety of capacities, and assisting in fundraising events. A general election is held at the beginning of each year, and elected members serve a one-year term.

CCC has a long-standing commitment to serving children and families regardless of their financial situation. Voice of Chicago tuition is based on a sliding scale according to family income ranging from \$6/month to \$500/month.

## **Auditions**

### **Neighborhood Choirs:**

The audition process is quick and simple, open to students ages 8-18 years old. Singers do not need to have prior experience or to prepare anything for the audition. We are looking for students who can match pitch and have an enthusiasm for singing. Auditions typically take place in September, January, and May, and some programs continue accepting new singers on a rolling basis as space permits.

### **Dimension:**

Auditions for Dimension take place in May or June and are geared toward singers who are experiencing voice change to the lower register.

### **Voice of Chicago:**

Auditions for Voice of Chicago are open to advanced high school age singers and take place in May or June.

## **Online Programming**

Chicago Children's Choir offers a range of online learning opportunities, including Arts Enrichment programs that provide a deep dive on a range of music topics, as well as eCCC, a virtual choir alternative. These options parallel our school and after-school programs and empower singers to further engage in dialogue about the historical and social context of music. While they study musicianship across artistic traditions, these online experiences allow students to connect with young people across the city—and globe.

### **Arts Enrichment**

Arts Enrichment Sessions offer students an opportunity to connect and explore a study of music in an 8-week online session. Musical Theatre Workshop and Digital Songwriting courses will be offered to singers ages 8-18. Tuition for one 8-week Arts Enrichment Sessions is \$150. CCC provides this program through a pay-what-you-can policy.

### **eCCC**

eCCC is a virtual choir alternative that makes our one-of-a-kind choir experience accessible for anyone, regardless of circumstance, facilitating meaningful connections through music with singers across the city - and world. eCCC is available to singers ages 8-18. As this ensemble meets just once per week, tuition for eCCC is 50 percent of the sliding scale of after-school programs. Should singers transfer to an in-person program, tuition will be adjusted at the time of transfer.



## Performances and Events

Performance is an important aspect of the Chicago Children's Choir experience. Performance opportunities allow singers to showcase musical artistry and act as local and global ambassadors for the values of CCC. In addition to in-person performances, virtual opportunities may involve presentations such as live online sessions, virtual choir compositions using self-recordings, unique sound recordings, and collaborations with music organizations across the city, country, and world.

The following performance events are planned as a part of CCC's 2021-2022 program year:\*

*\*Dates are subject to change.*

### **Red Jacket Optional: October 16, 2021**

*Red Jacket Optional is Chicago Children's Choir's annual gala. Returning this year after a hiatus, this extraordinary event will be offered in-person or virtually. With live music and exceptional dining, the gala celebrates the Choir's 65th anniversary of bringing our youth and communities together for a future made stronger through song.*

### **65th Anniversary Birthday Service: October 24, 2021**

*To honor our founding 65 years ago, we return to the place where it all began, the First Unitarian Church of Chicago, for a musical birthday celebration*

### **Winter and Spring Celebrations**

*Each Neighborhood Choir Program will present a concert during the Winter and Spring seasons.*

### **Songs of the Season Concert: December 18, 2021**

*Chicago Children's Choir will celebrate the winter season with a concert featuring Voice of Chicago, CCC Alumni, and members of the Neighborhood Choir in honor of the Choir's 65th anniversary year.*

### **Black History Month Concert Series - *Remembering, Reclaiming, Reconnecting*: February 7-9, 2022**

*CCC singers will study and honor traditions of Black composers, history, and music throughout the year, culminating in a series of concerts in February.*

### **Tosca Performances at Lyric Opera: March 12 - April 10, 2022**

CCC is honored to provide the children's chorus for this production of Tosca, presented by the Lyric Opera of Chicago.

### **CCC Tours: March - June 2022**

Domestic travel opportunities with performances, cultural exchange, service projects and sightseeing are available to older singers in the Neighborhood Choir Program. Plans for an international tour for Voice of Chicago are in development.

### **Paint the Town Red: Thursday, May 26, 2022**

*An annual celebration of all of CCC's programs to close out the 65 anniversary season.*

### **Canto Latino Festival: June 11, 2022**

*This celebration will honor the Latinx community.*

## **Special Projects**

CCC often collaborates with other arts institutions such as Lyric Opera of Chicago, Chicago Symphony Orchestra, and Ravinia Festival, to name a few. Based on the artistic need for each project, CCC singers from Voice of Chicago, Neighborhood Choirs or Dimension may have the opportunity to audition or be selected to participate in these high caliber performances. These projects are driven by the artistic decisions of the presenting organization and CCC often does not have the flexibility to adjust rehearsal or performance schedules, artistic decisions, or ticket discount opportunities. A rigorous schedule that can often include school absences is typical for preparation. These experiences are incredibly valuable.

## **Assessments**

Chicago Children's Choir incorporates assessment into the program year to allow conductors to better understand individual singer's progress and to give singers feedback on specific areas of strength and opportunities for growth. CCC includes assessment of social-emotional learning, performance skills and musical knowledge.

Singers complete voice placements at the start of each year. Assessments combined with voice placements are used to place singers in the appropriate ensemble and voice part. Conductors informally assess singers throughout the year.

## **Singer Policies**

### **Attendance Policy**

Singers are expected to attend all rehearsals and performances. We understand that planned and unplanned absences will occur from time to time. Having no more than three total absences for Neighborhood Choir and Dimension singers and five total absences for Voice of Chicago singers in the first semester (August 30, 2021 – February 7, 2022) will allow singers to maintain a meaningful experience. Singers who exceed the absences allotted may be placed on a leave of absence.

Chicago Children's Choir follows the break schedule for Chicago Public Schools (CPS). Schools outside CPS may utilize a different break schedule. Please check calendars regularly to assure adherence to CCC's attendance guidelines.

Chicago Children's Choir requires prior notification of absences. When an absence is anticipated, Program Staff should be notified via email, phone call, or Remind message. If an emergency arises, please contact the Program Assistant. If a singer is expected in rehearsal and is not present, the Program Assistant will contact a guardian following the start of rehearsal to ensure singer safety.

Absence from any rehearsal before an event or performance may prohibit a student from participating in an event or performance, according to the discretion of the conductor. Dress rehearsals are mandatory rehearsals. Singers who do not attend a dress rehearsal will not be able to perform.

Leaves of absence may be offered to singers who are unable to adhere to the attendance guidelines. Singers who elect to take a leave of absence may be invited back mid-year or at the start of the following year. All singers need to be heard by the Artistic Staff before they are eligible to return.  
*Any flexibility is offered at the discretion of CCC staff.*

### **Tardy Policy**

Singers who arrive late to rehearsal must check in with CCC Program Staff. Three late arrivals (defined as 10-15 minutes or more) will be counted as an absence. Singers who arrive late to a performance or dress rehearsal may compromise their participation in that event.

### **Materials and Preparation**

Singers are issued music binders at the start of the program year. Music binders should be brought to each rehearsal unless otherwise noted by the conductor. Singers are responsible for music binders that are lost, stolen or damaged.

Chicago Children's Choir is not responsible for lost or stolen items. Singers should not bring valuable items to rehearsals or performances. Lockers are provided for VOC & Dimension singers to use at the Chicago Cultural Center.

### **Uniforms**

Each singer will receive one or more uniforms that are provided by CCC. Families will pay for uniform shoes. Occasional informal performances will require singers to wear a CCC t-shirt with jeans or black pants. Replacement and extra t-shirts can be purchased.

CCC respects all students' gender identity and gender expression by honoring the uniform selection that each singer feels is best suited to their gender identity. In the case where there are two different uniforms, singers may select to wear Uniform A or Uniform B. Based on their selection, singers will be provided with the appropriate sizing for all uniforms to be worn for performances.

CCC will provide uniform pieces and size exchanges as needed throughout the singer's time in the Choir. Families will pay for uniform shoes as needed as well as replacements for lost uniform pieces. Families are also expected to turn in uniform pieces that they have outgrown or when they are no longer a participant in CCC.

### **Voice of Chicago**

Singers in Voice of Chicago wear several different uniforms. If a performance requires uniform pieces beyond those listed below, Program Staff will work with families to ensure singers are prepared with all necessary pieces.

#### *Black Blazer Uniform A (Business Casual):*

Black blazer, red V-neck CCC logo t-shirt, black long-sleeved t-shirt, black jeggings, black no-show socks, black patent leather Oxford shoes, black canvas shoes (required for alternate uniform look).

#### *Black Blazer Uniform B (Business Casual):*

Black blazer, red V-neck CCC logo t-shirt, black long sleeve t-shirt, black no-fade jeans, black no-show socks, black belt, black leather boots, black canvas shoes (required for alternate uniform look).

### **Dimension**

Grey buttoned vest, black long-sleeved t-shirt, black v-neck t-shirt, black no-fade jeans, black belt, black socks, black leather boots.

### **Neighborhood Choirs**

*Formal Uniform A:* Long open-front grey vest, black scoop-neck shirt, black jeggings, black no-show socks, white casual shoes.

*Formal Uniform B:* Grey buttoned vest, black long sleeve tee shirt, black no-fade jeans, a black belt, black no-show socks, white casual shoes.

### **Performance Appearance**

When in uniform, members of Chicago Children's Choir are a representation of the organization. All uniforms should be clean and pressed for performances. Singers are expected to arrive in full uniform and to always wear the uniform in its entirety. Singers who do not arrive in full uniform may compromise their participation in that event.

In addition to the uniform, singers are expected to maintain a professional appearance at performances. Singers should check with CCC staff if there are questions.

Hair should be pulled back and away from the face. Black or neutral colored hair accessories should be used to ensure hair stays in place throughout the performance. Hair should be a natural color. Color treatment is permitted in natural tones.

Jewelry, watches, and distracting accessories are not permitted when performing. Small, silver or gold hoop/post earrings are allowed.

Natural and age-appropriate makeup is permitted for performances. Singers may be asked to change or remove makeup before a performance. Nail polish should be of a clear/natural tone.

Recommendations may be given for performance specific requests. Please check with CCC staff if you have questions.

### **Drop Off and Pick Up for CCC Activities**

Program Staff will arrive thirty minutes prior to any CCC activity (rehearsal, performance, event, etc.). Singers who are dropped off prior to that time will not have CCC supervision. Program Staff will inform families of site-specific drop off and pick up procedures at the beginning of each activity. To keep numbers low indoors, only singers will be allowed in the space, and the building may not have a separate space available for parents to wait.

Families are asked to pick up their singer promptly at the end of each CCC activity. Singers who are regularly picked up late may compromise their eligibility for promotion or participation in Special Projects.

### **Medication and Allergies**

Parents/guardians are responsible for notifying CCC of any necessary medication and food allergies. If the singer has a prior or current Emergency Action Plan (EAP), parents/guardians are strongly encouraged to provide a copy of the document to CCC upon registration. This information can be entered on the Active Net registration form under the Personal Care Plan section as needed.

A singer may possess an epinephrine auto-injector (EpiPen®) and/or medication prescribed for asthma for immediate use at the singer's discretion with proper notification from parent/guardian. Chicago Children's Choir does not maintain a supply of undesignated EpiPens.

Parents/guardians are strongly encouraged to review with their child the responsibilities in managing their singer's allergy and ensuring that their child understands his/her age-appropriate role.

Chicago Children's Choir will offer meals or snacks to singers at times. While accommodations will be made for vegetarian, vegan, gluten free, and nut-free options as available, we cannot guarantee that the meals will have been prepared in a completely nut-free facility. For any special dietary needs, singers are asked to bring their own safe foods.

## Singer Conduct, Expectations, and Discipline

### Expectations and Recommendations for the Best Learning Experience

- Wear school-appropriate clothing.
- Enjoy your food and drink *before* rehearsals. Water in a personal, reusable container is encouraged and permitted in rehearsals.
- Use of bathrooms is strongly encouraged prior to the start of rehearsals.
- Respect and courtesy must be shown at all times.

Singers are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with federal, state, and local laws and rules; in accordance with Chicago Children's Choir's policies and regulations; and in a way that respects the rights and safety of others. Staff will take corrective action when a singer's behavior does not meet these expectations or whenever the singer's conduct may reasonably be considered to: (a) be a threat or an attempted intimidation of another singer or staff member; or (b) endanger the health or safety of singers, staff, or property. Such misconduct includes, but is not limited to, the following:

1. Using, possessing, distributing, purchasing, or selling tobacco or nicotine materials, including electronic cigarettes; alcoholic beverages; or any illegal drugs, including any prescription drug when not prescribed for the singer by a physician or when used in a manner inconsistent with the prescribing physician's instructions.
2. Using, possessing, controlling, or transferring any weapon including a firearm, knife, brass knuckles, or other knuckle weapon regardless of its composition, a billy club, or any other object if used or attempted to be used to cause bodily harm, including "look alikes" of any of the above.
3. Engaging in hazing or any kind of bullying or aggressive behavior that does physical or psychological harm to a staff member or another singer, or urging other singers to engage in such conduct. Prohibited conduct specifically includes, without limitation, any use of violence, intimidation, force, noise, coercion, threats, stalking, harassment, sexual harassment, public humiliation, theft or destruction of property, retaliation, hazing, bullying, bullying using choir technology, or other comparable conduct.
4. Engaging in sexual activity, including without limitation, offensive touching, sexual harassment, indecent exposure, and sexual assault.
5. Causing or attempting to cause damage to, or stealing or attempting to steal, Choir's property or another person's personal property.
6. Being involved in gangs or gang-related activities, including displaying gang symbols or paraphernalia.
7. Violating any criminal law, including but not limited to, assault, battery, arson, theft, gambling, eavesdropping, vandalism, and hazing.
8. Engaging in any activity, at or outside of Choir (including on an Internet website), that interferes with, disrupts, or adversely affects the Choir environment, operations, or a Choir function, including but not limited to, conduct that may reasonably be considered to: (a) be a threat or an attempted intimidation of a staff member; or (b) endanger the health or safety of singers, staff, or property.

## **Disciplinary Measures**

Potential disciplinary measures include, without limitation, any of the following:

- Notifying parents/guardians
- Disciplinary conference
- Withholding of privileges
- Temporary removal
- Return of property or restitution for lost, stolen or damaged property
- Seizure of contraband; confiscation and temporary retention of personal property that was used to violate this policy or CCC disciplinary rules
- Suspension from Choir and all Choir activities. A singer who has been suspended may also be restricted from being on grounds and at Choir activities
- Expulsion from Choir and all Choir activities for a definite time period. A singer who has been expelled may also be restricted from being on grounds and at Choir activities
- Notifying juvenile authorities or other law enforcement whenever the conduct involves criminal activity.

The above list of disciplinary measures is a range of options that will not always be applicable in every case. Choir personnel are authorized to impose any disciplinary measure that is appropriate and in accordance with the policies and rules on singer discipline.

## **Safe Environment**

### **Diversity Statement**

CCC is committed to providing a safe and welcoming environment for all singers, regardless of race, color, nationality, sex, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity or expression, ancestry, religion, socioeconomic status, medical condition or disability. In line with this commitment, CCC respects all students' gender identity and gender expression by honoring the right of students to be identified and addressed by their pronouns and preferred name.

### **Harassment**

As stated above, harassment will not be tolerated. Singers are entitled to be educated in an environment that is respectful of their backgrounds, characteristics, and differences. CCC prohibits any conduct that harasses, intimidates or bullies singers, whether that conduct is singer-to-singer, employee-to-singer, or singer-to-employee. CCC will not tolerate harassing, intimidating conduct, or bullying whether verbal, physical, sexual or visual, that creates an intimidating, hostile, or offensive environment or that violates a singer's civil rights, including race, color, nationality, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, ancestry, age, religion, or physical or mental disability.

### **Sexual Harassment**

As stated above, sexual harassment is prohibited. All CCC employees are required to complete annual sexual harassment training. Any person, including a Choir employee or agent, or singer, engages in sexual harassment whenever sexual advances are made, sexual favors are requested, and/or engages in other verbal or physical conduct, including sexual violence, of a sexual or sex-based nature, imposed on the basis of sex, which has the purpose or effect of:

- a. Substantially interfering with a singer's educational environment;
- b. Creating an intimidating, hostile or offensive educational environment;
- c. Depriving a singer of educational aid, benefits, services or treatment.

The terms "intimidating," "hostile," and "offensive" include conduct that has the effect of humiliation, embarrassment or discomfort. Examples of sexual harassment include touching, crude jokes or pictures, discussions of sexual experiences, teasing related to sexual characteristics, and spreading rumors related to a person's alleged sexual activities. The term sexual violence includes a number of acts, including sexual assault, rape, sexual battery, sexual abuse, and sexual coercion.

Singers are encouraged to report claims or incidences of harassing conduct based on a protected characteristic or other civil right, including sexual harassment, to the Program Director or any other Choir employee. Complaints will be kept confidential to the extent possible given the need to investigate. Singers who make good faith complaints will not be disciplined.

Any Choir employee who is determined, after an investigation, to have engaged in conduct prohibited by this policy will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including discharge. Any singer who is determined, after an investigation, to have engaged in conduct prohibited by this policy will be subject to disciplinary action. Any person making a knowingly false accusation regarding prohibited conduct will likewise be subject to disciplinary action.



## **Child Safety Reporting**

As a part of CCC's commitment to provide a safe environment for all singers, all CCC employees are required to complete background checks and mandated reporter training, in addition to periodic trainings in keeping children safe.

The Illinois Abused and Neglected Child Reporting Act requires any CCC personnel having reasonable cause to believe a child known to them in their professional capacity may be an abused or neglected child to immediately report or cause a report to be made to the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services.

CCC personnel with reasonable cause to believe a child may be at risk of harming themselves or others will contact the Illinois State Police so they can take appropriate actions. The "clear and present danger" law was designed to ensure that students who demonstrate a risk of suicidal or homicidal actions do not have access to firearms or weapons. To support children who express significant social and emotional challenges but do not demonstrate suicidal or homicidal ideation, CCC personnel may speak directly with the child, guardian, or contact Screening Assessment or Support Services (SASS).

## **Health and Safety Guidelines**

CCC's top priority is creating a safe space for young people to come together on common ground. In doing so, we are committed to following guidelines of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, [Illinois Department of Public Health](#), Chicago Department of Public Health and medical advisors, as well as the results of the July 2021 [International Coalition Performing Arts Aerosol Study](#). In the event that safety measures become too restrictive for a high quality, in-person experience, CCC will shift to virtual programming accordingly. Similarly, as restrictions relax, CCC will communicate new safety measures to singers and families.

## **In-Person Programming - Safety Practices as of August 2021:**

### **Health Screening**

- Self-monitoring health prior to attending rehearsal
- Temperature checks upon arrival (must be below 100.4 to participate)
- Weekly testing is recommended for all singers. Testing is largely available through schools and guidance on procedures is forthcoming from Chicago Public Schools. If unavailable through their school, singers may request weekly at-home tests through Chicago Children's Choir. CCC will aim to accommodate as many of these requests as possible during periods of significant community transmission.
- All CCC staff are vaccinated and provided with weekly testing.

### **Sanitation**

- Hand sanitizer upon arrival, sanitization of any shared materials
- Air purifiers will be utilized in all rehearsal spaces.
- Singers will be dismissed 10 minutes before the end of each class to allow for air exchange.

### **Distancing**

- Well-fitted masks that cover the nose and mouth must be used at all times. Surgical masks provided.
- 6 foot distancing between participants while singing or engaging in activities with heavy exhalation. Distance may be reduced to 3 feet when engaging in other static activities.

- Only singers will be able to enter the rehearsal space. There may not be a separate waiting area available for parents.

### **Personal Responsibility:**

We ask that families partner with Chicago Children's Choir to keep our community safe. We strongly encourage vaccination as eligibility allows. Additionally, where COVID testing is available weekly in schools, we strongly encourage families to take advantage of this service. In lieu of completing a health screening, we ask families self-assess singers for the following symptoms:

- Muscle or body aches from an unknown cause
- Fatigue from an unknown cause
- New cough
- Fever (100.4 or higher)
- New onset of moderate to severe headache
- New loss of sense of taste or smell
- Vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Shortness of breath
- Sore throat

Please keep your singer home if any of the above symptoms are present and inconsistent with previously diagnosed seasonal health conditions (allergies), or other chronic illnesses. If singers do not meet the health requirements to attend in-person programming or are forced to quarantine or isolate due to COVID exposure, please notify your Program Assistant and we will try to accommodate an opportunity to "zoom in" to rehearsal.

### **Performances and Tours:**

Additional guidance for performers and audience will be provided based on the guidance at the time of each performance. Additional safety measures may include:

- Proof of vaccination or negative COVID test within 72 hours of performance to allow for performers to present with less distance
- Proof of vaccination or negative COVID test within 72 hours of performance for audience
- Performances to be live-streamed with limited or no in-person audience
- Proof of vaccination for all tour participants

### **Positive Diagnoses, Contact Tracing, and Quarantine**

CCC should be notified of a COVID-19 positive test result by a parent/guardian, staff or program partner using [this form](#). Specifically for COVID-19, we look at those who have been in close contact with an individual who's tested positive. Close contact is defined as someone who was within six feet for a total of 15 minutes or more within two days prior to illness onset, regardless of whether the contact was wearing a mask.

Based on attendance records and seating charts, CCC will determine possible exposures to the COVID-19 positive case; this includes determining if the ill individual participated in CCC activities during their contagious period (two days prior to onset of symptoms or positive test if asymptomatic), and what individuals were in close contact with them.

CCC will notify via email anyone present onsite during the contagious period of a positive individual. Those identified as close contacts will be advised to quarantine at home even if they do not have symptoms. The parent/guardian of the individual who tested positive for COVID-19 may receive a call from the Chicago Department of Public Health (312-74-COVID) as part of the city's contact tracing program.

The safest option for individuals who feel healthy but recently had close contact with a person with COVID-19 is to stay home for 14 days after their last exposure. Check your temperature twice a day and watch for symptoms of COVID-19. If you do not have symptoms, an acceptable alternative is to quarantine for 10 days, or if you do not have symptoms AND receive a negative COVID-19 test result on day five or after, to quarantine for seven days. Fully vaccinated individuals do not need to quarantine if asymptomatic.

## **Fees and Deposits**

### **Tuition**

CCC has a long-standing commitment to serving children and families regardless of their financial situation. All programs are heavily discounted through the generosity of individuals, corporations, and foundations, allowing us to remove a financial barrier to participation. Tuition is based on a sliding scale according to family income ranging from \$6/month to \$200/month for Neighborhood Choir and Dimension programs and up to \$500/month for Voice of Chicago. Families can elect to pay tuition in full, in quarterly installments or in monthly installments with the final tuition payment due May 2022.

CCC is committed to working with all families, regardless of circumstance, to make tuition accessible. Families who are not able to meet tuition requirements or deadlines should contact CCC's City-wide Program Director, Jackie Johnson, at [jjohnson@ccchoir.org](mailto:jjohnson@ccchoir.org).

### **Methods of Payment**

Chicago Children's Choir accepts all major credit cards. Payments may also be made by check, money order or cash. The easiest way to make payment is online through [CCC's Active registration portal](#). We encourage all payments not made online to be mailed to CCC's main office.

Chicago Children's Choir  
78 E Washington St., 5<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Chicago, IL 60602  
Attn: Accounts Receivable Department

When making a payment by check, money order or cash, please include the singer's name, name of the choir program, and indicate the purpose of the payment. Make checks and money orders payable to Chicago Children's Choir.

### **Registration**

Families should complete online or paper registration forms prior to the first rehearsal. Singers may not be eligible to participate in CCC activities until registration is received. A \$15 fee will be collected at the time of registration.

## Family Involvement

Families are essential participants in the mission of Chicago Children's Choir. CCC is grateful for family attendance at concerts, fundraisers and events. A full schedule of CCC's activities throughout the year is available at: [www.ccchoir.org/events](http://www.ccchoir.org/events).

### Parent/Guardian Meetings

Periodic meetings are scheduled for parents/guardians and singers throughout the year. These meetings offer CCC the opportunity to convey important information about policies and upcoming events. Please note meeting dates on your monthly calendar and plan to attend.

### Parent/Guardian Representatives

Interested parents/guardians can volunteer to serve as a Parent/Guardian Representative. Parent/Guardian Representatives work with the Program Assistant to coordinate volunteers, plan receptions, and community building activities, and help in engaging families in CCC programs. Each parent/guardian representative is additionally invited to participate in CCC's Family Engagement Task Force, a committee of CCC's Board of Directors designed to advise and provide family perspectives.

### Volunteer Opportunities

Chicago Children's Choir staff is responsible for ensuring the appropriate supervision of all singer activities. Occasionally, CCC is in need of Level II volunteers at Choir events. Parents/guardians who are interested in volunteering should notify Program Staff. CCC has a volunteer policy aligned with Chicago Public Schools, stated below.

#### *Volunteer Policy*

- I. Level I Volunteers
  - a. Any individual providing 10 or more hours of volunteer service per week at CCC events involving singers; any individual earning observation hours as a pre-service teacher; any individual serving as a one-on-one mentor; any individual working with singers in an unsupervised setting.
  - b. All Level I Volunteers must complete a fingerprint criminal background check.
  - c. An individual who has been convicted of any criminal offense shall be ineligible to be a volunteer. An individual who has been convicted of an offense that requires them to appear on a sex offender registry in any jurisdiction shall be ineligible to serve as a volunteer.
- II. Level II Volunteers
  - a. Any individual providing less than 10 hours of volunteer service per week at CCC events involving singers; any individual providing incidental volunteer service at a one-time event where there is direct supervision of the activity/event by CCC staff; any parent/guardian accompanying their child to any CCC event that does not involve an overnight stay; any individual providing volunteer service with minimal or no contact with children.
  - b. A fingerprint criminal background check is not required for Level II Volunteer opportunities.

This policy does not prohibit CCC from requiring a criminal background check as needed to verify an individual's qualifications to serve as a volunteer or to require a volunteer to complete an additional criminal background check.

### Donate to Chicago Children's Choir

Through the support of dedicated and generous parents, Chicago Children's Choir has grown from one choir at the First Unitarian Church of Chicago in Hyde Park in 1956, to a robust, city-wide network of school and after-

school choirs. We are committed to the belief that bringing diverse youth together in song provides a unique way to break down the barriers of race and class and allows youth to discover themselves and the world around them.

We appreciate the many families who consider making a gift to Chicago Children's Choir or who have connected CCC to funding opportunities offered by individuals, businesses, and corporations. The voices of Chicago's youth are stronger thanks to these connections and the support of our families. This advocacy and support allows us to continue our mission of inspiring and changing lives through music.

## Faculty & Administration

### Faculty

Lisa Arnold  
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## Faculty & Administration

### Administration

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## **Board of Directors**

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