

## **TEACHER HANDBOOK** (DANCE / TUMBLING / THEATRE)

Please read through this handbook carefully, even if you have been teaching with us for several years. This handbook is revised frequently.

### **Contact Info**

Please direct all issues to the office manager at the studio.

If there is an emergency and you can't make it to class, (eg. Major health issue, car accident), you should immediately call the phone numbers below in the listed order until you reach someone.

You must call - DO NOT EMAIL – we may not get it in time.

Please be aware that if we have classes 6 days a week, our office manager takes a different day off each week.

Studio Main Phone:	O: (504) 737-5977	<a href="mailto:info@dancetumblemusic.com">info@dancetumblemusic.com</a>
Pam Maag, Office Manager	C: (504) 231-7056	<a href="mailto:pam@dancetumblemusic.com">pam@dancetumblemusic.com</a>
Morgan Wilson, Program Director	C: (504) 258-7515	<a href="mailto:morgan@dancetumblemusic.com">morgan@dancetumblemusic.com</a>
Marc Fouchi, Payroll / Facilities,	C: (504) 908-8388	<a href="mailto:marc@dancetumblemusic.com">marc@dancetumblemusic.com</a>
Kelly Fouchi, Studio Director	C: (504) 390-5359	<a href="mailto:kelly@dancetumblemusic.com">kelly@dancetumblemusic.com</a>

Please ensure that all your contact numbers, birthday and email address are correct at the front desk.

### **Class Lists**

At the beginning of September, if a child does not show up for a class, please write it down and at the end of the day, tell the desk staff. Also, if someone was missing off of the roster and shows up for class, please take their name and also let the desk staff know. We continue to fill up the classes over September and into October. If you have a class that only has a few students and the parents are worried about this, let them know that a lot of people still register over September and into October. Also, in September you will see names on your schedules with "hold" beside them. This means that they have called to hold a spot, but have not come in to confirm. If they do not show up for the class, please make sure to let the desk staff know.

### **Pay / Pay Periods / Time Reporting**

You are paid on the 15<sup>th</sup> and last day of each month via direct deposit. If that day falls on a weekend or holiday, you will be paid on the closest preceding business day.

The two pay periods are as follows: 25<sup>th</sup> thru 9<sup>th</sup> – paid on 15<sup>th</sup>; 10<sup>th</sup> thru 24<sup>th</sup> – paid on last day of month.

At the end of each day, log your hours in Jackrabbit, and select the type of hours (Teach, Admin, Private, etc..).

Use hours in decimals when logging hours. (Ex: If you work 75 minutes, you log 1.25. Be careful NOT to log 1.15) Any issues regarding pay should be directed to Marc.

### **Weather closures/Power Failure Closure**

If we have to cancel a day or a partial day of teaching due to weather closures or power failures, we will try to add a make-up class – especially if it is towards the end of the teaching year. You are not paid when class is cancelled due to these reasons.

### **Messages**

We use email and text for most of our communication with you.

Also, please check with the office manager before your classes in case she has information for you.

## **Teacher Dress Code**

Please do not wear old, tired clothes to teach in. Ballet (including combo) dance class should be taught in a leotard, tights, ballet skirt and ballet shoes. We provide instructors with an Encore t-shirt to wear while teaching. You may purchase more shirts if you like. Check with Kelly or office manager about proper attire.

## **Timeliness**

Please arrive at least 10 minutes early for your teaching day. If you choose to go into the dance rooms before your class begins, keep in mind that people in the waiting room can see you on the monitors.

Please be aware of the time and do not go over with your students, as this not only cuts into the next class' time, but it may affect how we have staggered class times to alleviate parking. Also please do not shorten the time that you give to your students. Each student should get their full class time.

## **Teacher Absences and Substitutes**

### **Illness and Missing**

We will enforce a minimum attendance policy with the students. We expect them to respect your time and not hold the class back when learning their concert piece. However, we also expect the same in return from you. Please do not schedule performances and other activities on days that you teach with us. It is very difficult for us to get substitutes, especially last minute, and we think it is important that the students have the consistency of the same teacher every week. Please try to get through if it's something minor like a headache. If it is absolutely unavoidable, please give us as much notice as possible.

If you miss, we expect you to find your own sub from our existing teachers or our sub list. However, if you are extremely ill and cannot do it yourself, we will try and find a substitute for you. Please call the office manager first thing in the morning. If you cannot reach her, make your way down the contact list above. The more notice we have, the better chance we have of finding you a sub. If you know of a sub that is not on our list, please ask the office manager to get approval first.

### **Teacher missing for other reasons other than illness**

If we have to get substitute teachers for any reason other than the teacher being ill, we are in a very awkward position. The students need the consistency of the same teacher, every week, and parents begin to complain when the class is often covered by a sub. The worst scenario is when no one can sub and we have to cancel a class. Please also schedule your Thanksgiving, Christmas, Spring Break, and all holiday plans so you are back when we are open, not after.

Absences due to lack of transportation will be considered inexcusable.

## **Student Attendance, Lateness, Dress Code**

We have a minimum attendance policy for our students. Please make sure that you take attendance every class in the binder that will be in the studio. Please leave your folder in the studio so if we need to see it, we can always have access to it. Please do not forget to take attendance every single class. Please tell the desk staff once a student has missed 3 times so we can call the parents. We will enforce the attendance policy to help you, but don't want to be in a situation at concert time where we find out that a student has missed over 4 times and you don't want them in the show and then we have to call the parents. We always want to have the opportunity to give the warning call first.

If you notice that a child is not on your roster but is in class, please write the child's name down and bring to the front desk immediately after class. Please do not forget to do this!! It is very important that we have the child registered in our system before he/she is allowed to take any other classes.

Please make sure to enforce our dress code policy. Proper class attire and guidelines are listed here: <http://www.dancetumblemusic.com/docs/EncoreAttireRequirements.pdf>

Each studio will have notes that are to go home with the child if he/she is not properly dressed. We also need your help ensuring that students do not tear up our dance floors by wearing inappropriate shoes. Please see the attire requirements for the studio at the end of this handbook.

In January, once classes start preparing for the concert piece, students who are injured or ill are still expected to come and watch the class so that they do not fall behind. (if the illness allows)

### **Class Time**

Please remember that every day is observation day. The cameras in the lobby are always on. Please do not ever leave students in a classroom unattended.

## **DO NOT make phone calls, text, browse the internet, or use social media while you are teaching a class.**

**This will not be tolerated.** Parents pay for the full lesson time and should get the full time. Your cell phone or any mobile device may only be used for music unless there is an emergency. If you have a medical emergency and need to leave right away, please let the office manager know before you leave so someone can supervise the students.

### **Personal Social Media**

- **You are not permitted to initiate, solicit or accept “Friend/Follow” requests with enrolled Encore students on any personal Social Media Account.**
- When posting online, please remember that your online behavior should reflect the same standards of honesty, respect, decency, and consideration that you use face-to-face.
- You are responsible for all that you do, say, and post online. Anything posted online should represent you in a professional manner as others will see you as connected to Encore.
- Do not post negative public messages/media about Encore
- Do not post photos or video of fellow instructors or staff without their permission.
- Do not use photos or video taken at Encore without permission.
- Do not post photos or video that contain students without parental consent.
- Do not encourage students enrolled at Encore to create social media accounts of any kind.
- Do not post material that would be deemed inappropriate by students or their families, such as, but not limited to: provocative or sexually explicit messages/photos/videos, drug use, hate speech, cyberbullying. If students / parents obtain access to such material posted by you, it will be investigated by Encore staff and if warranted, will be disciplined up to and including termination, depending on the severity of the offense, and may be forwarded to the appropriate state department for review and possible further action.

### **Staff-Student Relations**

You are prohibited from establishing unprofessional and thereby inappropriate personal relationships with Encore students. Examples of unprofessional relationships include, but are not limited to: fraternizing or communicating with students as if you and students were peers such as writing personal/intimate letters or emails; “texting” students; calling students on cell phones or allowing students to make personal calls to them unrelated to Encore; sending inappropriate pictures to students; discussing or revealing to students personal matters about their private lives or inviting students to do the same, and engaging in sexualized dialogue, whether in person, by phone, via the Internet or in writing.

## **Contact with Parents**

It's ok to take a minute or so between classes to chat with a parent, but anything beyond that should be done on the studio telephone. If a parent asks to speak with you after the class, and you have another class waiting, please ask the parent to leave a message at the front desk and you will call them during your office hours. We will never give your contact information out to a family. If you need to call a parent, use the studio telephone. Please do not use your own phone or email. Never give your phone number or email to a parent. All communication must go through the office manager or the studio phone.

## **Outside organizations / events**

Some instructors teach at or perform with other studios, or have their own related organization or business. This is perfectly fine, but Encore is also a business trying to build its own student base. As you saw in your teacher contract, you are not allowed to solicit Encore students to take class elsewhere, or encourage them to join outside organizations or participate in events that are not sponsored by Encore that would cause them to drop their classes. Furthermore, you are not allowed to discuss these organizations in any way during your classes. Your intentions may be good – thinking you are exposing students to other opportunities, but we consider these outside organizations and events to be a conflict of interest, because it can ultimately cause students to drop their classes to make time for those activities.

Encore offers master classes and performance opportunities for our students throughout the year, and we control the scheduling and time commitment to make sure they do not conflict with classes.

We also do not allow students to wear attire from other competing schools, studios or programs while at Encore, as we consider this to be the same as our competitors advertising inside our own business.

## **Handing out Memos**

From time to time, we need your assistance in getting memos out to students. We will let you know and have them ready in the studio. With items such as recital program lists, please ensure that you hand them in by the date requested as we have printing deadlines to make.

## **Trial Students**

We offer trial classes to give a child a chance to see how fun class can be and introduce prospective new students to our studio. If you have one or more trial students in your class, please introduce them to the returning students, and choose a 'class buddy' to pair them up with so they don't feel like an outsider. This is our chance to make a great first impression on the child, and of course we want them to go back to their parent in the lobby after class smiling from ear to ear wanting to return.

Please conduct the class as you normally would, and have some 'homework' prepared for the class, especially when a trial student is attending. Something that they can work on and look forward to bringing back to class next week. It can be anything – coloring sheet, a song, a dance step, etc...

Finally, thank the trial student for joining us and remind them to go back to the lobby for their special gift. This will give the office manager a chance to see if the family would like to register for classes instead of the parent picking up the student and the door and leaving right away.

We also have 'Bring a Friend' days, which will work in a similar fashion to a trial student, except they already have a class buddy.

## **Maintenance**

The studio is cleaned on a weekly basis; however, we do require that you clean the mirrors after every class. We keep a bottle of glass cleaner in each studio bathroom. In the past, teachers have asked older students to help clean the mirrors a few minutes before class is over. They are usually more than willing to help. If you need toilet paper, napkins, or trash bags for the studio bathroom, or if any equipment is broken or not working properly, please let the office manager know.

### **Heaters and Air Conditioners**

The air condition/heat is set on a schedule. Please do not adjust the temperature. ESPECIALLY don't press 'Hold', which will keep it running all night long and waste a lot of money. If the setting is uncomfortable for you, please let the office manager know so they can adjust it permanently for your class. If for any reason you feel that they are not working, please let the front desk know right away so we can get them repaired.

### **Food and Drinks**

Please feel free to eat in your studio or the office during a break, but please do not allow students to eat in the studio. Do **NOT** place any beverage on or near the piano or stereo under any circumstances. Please put your drinks on the table or on the floor. Please make sure that your students do not place their drinks anywhere near the piano. **Water is the only beverage that a student may bring into the studio.** Please pick up empty bottles or garbage in your studios before you leave. The studio has a fridge and microwave for the teachers use. The office manager can show you where it is located.

### **Garbage**

Please do not leave half-full coffee cups, soda cans etc. in your studio and please no food garbage. It attracts bugs and causes odors. Please pour out liquids and dispose of those in the main garbage cans.

### **Parking**

Parking spaces are very limited. We try our best to stagger large classes to help the situation. We ask that instructors park "next door" in the parking lots of the businesses next to us. This leaves spots in our parking lot for our customers with young children. These two businesses are usually not open when we are. This has worked well and we have not had any complaints. However, the small realty company (to the left when facing the building) complains if anyone parks in front of their business, so don't park there.

### **Misc**

Water breaks – Do not let your students out of the dance studio for water breaks. Tell them to bring a water bottle to class. On the same note, **water is the only beverage that is allowed in the studio.** If they forget the water bottle, they will just have to wait until the end of class. It is very disruptive to the class when they all come out. Also, the parents think that you are wasting class time. We don't mind if you give them a break, but please do inside of the studio.

For preschool classes we have found it very helpful for teachers to come into the lobby before class starts and ask that all dancers please use the restroom because "class is about to start." Preschool dancers tend to like to go "potty" every 5 minutes once class starts. Asking the students to use the restroom before class starts, usually prevents this from happening.