**EMACT Professional Disclosure Guidelines**

We are fortunate here in eastern Massachusetts, to have access to a huge spectrum of theatre, from full-scale Equity productions, to “semi-professional” groups with Equity leads and amateur ensembles, to strictly-volunteer community groups.

**EMACT, as our name states, is an organization intended to serve community theatre groups that are, by definition, amateur.**

This document is intended to provide guidance as to whether someone qualifies as a “theater professional” for these purposes.

It takes into account multiple factors, including:

* if anyone is paid (and how much),
* whether anyone involved is a professional (and how to define that),
* and whether aspects of a show are professionally designed.

The purpose of the Professional Disclosure Form is twofold: first, to determine whether a production is eligible as a “community theatre” production; and second, to determine whether any individual aspects of a production are ineligible for a DASH nomination or award.

**1. Did any actors receive a stipend greater than $200?**

Generally, community theatre actors are unpaid. If an entire cast of actors is paid a significant stipend (i.e., more than $200 each), this pushes the production into the realm of being “professional,” and the production is excluded from DASH consideration. We do understand that there may be times when roles are difficult to fill and a financial incentive can help, so a cast receiving smaller stipends is acceptable, and a single actor receiving a larger stipend will be considered for inclusion on a case-by-case basis.

**2. Were any elements rented or otherwise professionally designed?**

The DASH awards are intended to reward amateur designers, not professionals. A set, lighting plot, costume plot, etc., may be designed by a professional (either as a rental or designed in-house) and the score for that element will be included in the overall score for the production, but the individual element will not be considered for an award. In the case of costume rentals, renting some items – even most items – does not necessarily preclude a nomination or award in that category. If a group rents a full costume plot, however, it’s a case of “coordination” rather than “design,” and therefore ineligible for an award. In addition, most design aspects include a score for degree of difficulty, so adjudicators take into account whether items were rented or built in-house.

**3. Are any technical or artistic staff members of a professional union or do they earn a living wage as a theatre professional?**

We define a “theatre professional” in three ways: 1) member of a relevant union, and/or 2) earning a living wage in that area, and/or 3) a full-time, paid employee of the presenting theater. This includes:

* Performers who are members of Actors’ Equity Association.
* Designers who are members of a union relevant to their position (e.g., IATSE, SSD&C, etc.), and designers who earn their living in a relevant industry (e.g., a lighting designer who owns and/or is employed by a professional lighting company or a set designer who is employed full-time as the technical director of a theater company). A designer who is a member of one theatrical union but designing a *different* aspect of a production (e.g., an Equity member serving as a choreographer, or a director who is a member of IATSE) would be eligible for nominations and awards unrelated to their union affiliation.
* Any full time, paid employee of the presenting company that works as a designer or director.

**Please note:** A production involving a single Equity performer would generally be eligible for awards other than that individual actor; however, in the case of a “star vehicle” centered around a single Equity performer (e.g. the title role in a show like *Mame*, *Jesus Christ Superstar*, or *Evita*), a production may be excluded from the DASH program at the discretion of the DASH Director(s).

The ballot scores for any “ineligible” design/director aspect of a production will be still be included in the total score for that production.

**Other frequently asked questions:**

* Pit musicians may be union members and may be paid scale.
* There is no limit on production theater staff stipends or payments, as long as that person is not making a living wage in that position.
* Actors who are members of the Screen Actors’ Guild but not Actors’ Equity are considered eligible for individual acting awards.