

IMPORTANT NOTICE TO STAGE HYPNOTISTS, MEMBERS' OF EQUITY

REDUCED INSURANCE PREMIUM October 2010

Equity Stage Hypnotist Supervision Panel and Register Of Stage Hypnotists.

Equity has formed the Equity Stage Hypnotist Supervision Panel (The Panel) with the intention of establishing an Equity Register of Stage Hypnotists (ERSH) and a recognised set of standards, conduct and ethics for its members.

The purpose of The Panel is to oversee ERSH and to ensure the compliance of its Code.

The principal responsibilities of The Panel are to;

- establish a Code of Conduct and ensure its compliance.
- ensure that its members comply with the Hypnotism Act 1952 and any subsequent legislation and the Model Conditions Annexed to Home Office Circular No 39/1996 in the manner described in clause 6 of the Code of Conduct below.
- Establish a network of Equity stage hypnotists who would agree to mentor or advise less experienced performers.
- establish a complaints procedure.
- ensure proper record keeping.
- approve applicants subject to the minimum requirements below;

Acceptable applicants must be;

over 25 years old and permanently resident in the UK.

free from criminal conviction other than motoring offences.

able to undertake a professional performance of stage hypnosis to a standard acceptable to The Panel.

able to submit for approval a complete description of their performance.

able to obtain two references from an acceptable source.

able to complete to a standard acceptable to Insurers an insurance proposal form.

Public Liability Insurance £1,000,000 Limit of Indemnity

Equity, with the assistance of First Act Insurance, has obtained Public Liability Insurance from the Royal and Sun Alliance at the cost of £742 including insurance premium tax per member for an annual period.

To assist members, the Equity Council has consented to subsidise this amount by £125 leaving a total remaining payable of **£617**.

Only Equity members successfully registering for ERSH will be able to apply for cover.

This Insurance is provided on a claims made basis meaning that any claim must be brought in writing against the Insured during the policy period or within thirty days of its expiry. Claims arising from an incident prior to the inception of this policy will not be insured.

It is a condition of the policy cover that the member conforms with the Code of Conduct below in addition to the remaining policy terms and conditions.

A summary of cover accompanies this document. A specimen policy wording is available on request.

Those requiring cover need to complete and return the attached application form to First Act Insurance, C/O Hencilla Canworth at the address shown together with payment for the sum of **£617**. A policy document will be sent to the member on receipt.

Please note that cover will only commence once an application has been accepted and approved by Insurers.

Equity Code of Conduct for Stage Hypnotists

Introduction

A Stage Hypnotist is a performer who uses suggestion upon participants that they are having certain experiences that are calculated to entertain an audience.

In the context of this document the terms '*participant*' (or '*subject*') and '*audience*' shall be defined according to the above.

Members of the Equity Register of Stage Hypnotists must undertake;

1. that they are in possession of sufficient knowledge, training and experience to carry out stage hypnosis safely.
2. not to claim that they possess any formal qualification in stage hypnosis when in reality no recognised qualification exists.
3. not to attempt to give the impression that hypnotism is anything other than a perfectly natural phenomenon.
4. to give the utmost priority to the safety of the participants.
5. not to wilfully subject the participants to distress or fear or malicious humiliation.
6. to comply with the applicable parts of the Home Office Model Conditions (Home Office Circular 39/1996) **as laid out below** of which all clauses except clause (c) shall apply in respect of licensed public performances only and clauses (d) to (n) shall apply to all other performances.
7. to inform Equity at the earliest opportunity of any incidents which take place during a performance that may lead to a claim against the public liability insurance policy.
8. to make a detailed account of each performance which must be preserved for at least five years.

9. to accept and be bound by any amendments made to this Code of Conduct that have been properly adopted by the governing body of Equity.
10. to understand that failure to comply with this Code will result in termination of their Equity public liability hypnosis insurance. (In such circumstances a pro rata refund of the annual premium will be given)
11. to accept disciplinary procedures in an agreed form from The Panel in the event of a breach of this Code of Conduct

Home Office Model Conditions (summary)

Publicity

- (a) no poster, advertisement or programme for the performance which is likely to cause public offence shall be displayed, sold or supplied, by or on behalf of the licensee either at the premises or elsewhere;
- (b) every poster, advertisement or programme for the performance which is displayed, sold or supplied shall include, clearly and legibly, the following statement:

"Volunteers, who must be aged 18 or over, can refuse at any point to continue taking part in the performance."

Insurance

- (c) the performance shall be covered to a reasonable level by public liability insurance. The hypnotist must provide evidence of this to the local authority if requested; and it must be available for inspection at the performance;

Physical arrangements

- (d) the means of access between the auditorium and the stage for participants shall be properly lit and free from obstruction;
- (e) a continuous white or yellow line shall be provided on the floor of any raised stage at a safe distance from the edge. This line shall run parallel with the edge of the stage for its whole width. The hypnotist shall inform all subjects that they must not cross the line while under hypnosis, unless specifically told to do so as a part of the performance;

Treatment of audience and subjects

- (f) before starting the performance the hypnotist shall make a statement to the audience, in a serious manner, identifying those groups of people who should not volunteer to participate in it; explaining what volunteers might be asked to perform; informing the audience of the possible risks from embarrassment or anxiety; and emphasising that subjects may cease to participate at any time they wish. The following is a suggested statement, which might be amended as necessary to suit individual styles so long as the overall message remains the same:

"I shall be looking for volunteers aged over 18 who are willing to be hypnotised and participate in the show. Anyone who comes forward should be prepared to take part in a range of entertaining hypnotic suggestions but can be assured that they will not be asked to do anything which is indecent, offensive or harmful. Volunteers need to be in normal physical and mental health and I must ask that no-one volunteers if they have a history of mental illness, are under the influence of alcohol or other drugs or are pregnant."

- (g) no form of coercion shall be used to persuade members of the audience to participate in the performance. In particular, hypnotists shall not use selection techniques which seek to identify and coerce onto the stage the most suggestible members of the audience without their prior knowledge of what is intended. Any use of such selection techniques (e.g. asking members of the audience to clasp their hands together and asking those who cannot free them again to come onto the stage) should only be used when the audience is fully aware of what is intended and that participation is entirely voluntary at every stage;
- (h) if volunteers are to remain hypnotised during an interval in the performance, a reasonable number of attendants as agreed with the licensing authority shall be in attendance throughout to ensure their safety;

Prohibited actions

- (i) the performance shall be so conducted as not to be likely to cause offence to any person in the audience or any hypnotised subject;
- (j) the performance shall be so conducted as not to be likely to cause harm, anxiety or distress to any person in the audience or any hypnotised subject. In particular, the performance shall not include:-
 - (i) any suggestion involving the age regression of a subject (ie, asking the subject to revert to an earlier age in their life; this does not prohibit the hypnotist from asking subjects to act as if they were a child etc);
 - (ii) any suggestion that the subject has lost something (eg, a body part) which, if really occurred, could cause

considerable distress.

(iii) any demonstration in which the subject is suspended between supports (so called "catalepsy")

(iv) the consumption of any harmful or noxious substance;

(v) any demonstration of the power of hypnosis to block pain (eg pushing a needle through the skin);

(k) the performance shall not include giving hypnotherapy or any other form of treatment;

Completion

(l) all hypnotised subjects shall remain in the presence of the hypnotist and in the room where the performance takes place until all hypnotic suggestions have been removed;

(m) all hypnotic or post-hypnotic suggestions shall be completely removed from the minds of the subjects and the audience before the performance ends. All hypnotised subjects shall have the suggestions removed both individually and collectively and the hypnotist shall confirm with each of them that they feel well and relaxed (the restriction on post-hypnotic suggestions does not prevent the hypnotist telling subjects that they will feel well and relaxed after the suggestions are removed);

(n) the hypnotist shall remain available for at least 30 minutes after the show to help deal with any problems which might arise. (Such help might take the form of reassurance in the event of headaches or giddiness but this condition does not imply that the hypnotist is an appropriate person to treat anyone who is otherwise unwell.)

Authorised access

(o) where-

- i. a constable; or
- ii. an authorised officer of the licensing authority; or
- iii. an authorised officer of the fire authority

has reason to believe that a performance is being, or is about to be, given he may enter the venue with a view to seeing whether the conditions on which approval for the performance was granted are being complied with.