



The Phoenix Symphony to Suspend 2026-27 Season Following Nov. 1 Performance

*As financial shortfall forces suspension of performances and programs,
Board works toward building a long-term financial foundation*

PHOENIX (Oct. 20, 2026) — The Phoenix Symphony's Board of Directors announced today that it has made the difficult decision to suspend the remaining 2026–27 performances and programs following the orchestra's scheduled performance on Sunday, Nov. 1.

The suspension will affect musicians, staff, subscribers and community programs. Unpaid layoffs of musicians will take effect Monday, Nov. 2.

The Symphony does not have the financial resources necessary to continue the season. Despite increased ticket sales and philanthropic support in recent years, ongoing operating deficits have left the organization with substantial financial obligations that make continuing the season untenable.

The Board and management have worked to address financial challenges through the CRESCENDO fundraising and endowment campaign and by implementing significant reductions in administrative costs.

Unfortunately, these efforts have not been enough. Anticipated contributions for the current fiscal year have fallen short of the amounts required to sustain operations, and more fundamental changes are necessary.

"This is the most difficult decision this Board has faced, and we did not make it lightly," said Mo Stein, Chairman of the Board of The Phoenix Symphony. "We have diligently pursued measures to close the gap between operating costs and revenues, and our efforts have not yet been enough. Continuing the season without the cash flow to meet our immediate obligations would put the institution's future at greater risk. Our responsibility now is to minimize further losses, create a robust restructuring plan and build a financial foundation that will last."

"We know the consequences of this decision on musicians and staff will be profound. They are the heart of the Symphony, and their artistry and dedication have deeply enriched this community," said Peter Kjome, President and CEO. "We also understand the disappointment for our subscribers, students, concertgoers and many community partners. It has been an honor to share our love of music with this community for nearly 80 years. Now our responsibility is to pursue every reasonable opportunity to preserve this institution for the future."

Efforts to Address the Shortfall

The Board and management have worked on several fronts to address the deficit:

- **Fundraising:** The CRESCENDO endowment campaign was launched in April 2025 with a \$60 million fundraising goal to create a long-term funding source for the Symphony.
- **Revenue:** Between FY2023 and FY2026, the Symphony's annual revenues increased by more than 50 percent.
- **Administrative cuts:** Approximately \$766,000 in administrative expense reductions have been identified and implemented.

However, essential costs have continued to increase, the majority of endowment gifts cannot be used for day-to-day funding needs, and philanthropic contributions for the current fiscal year have not reached the levels needed to sustain operations. Combined with the organization's existing obligations, this shortfall has created an immediate financial crisis.

What the Suspension Means

The Board's objective is to resume performances when the Symphony has secured the financial resources and implemented the changes necessary to operate sustainably. Whether or when that will be possible remains uncertain.

During the suspension, the Board and management will:

- Continue efforts already underway to address outstanding obligations and operating costs;
- Reassess revenue assumptions and fundraising needs; and
- Determine the conditions necessary for a responsible, sustainable return.

The Symphony will share information about its financial recovery plans as that work progresses.

"Any return to the season will depend on a realistic budget, verified support and the financial discipline to remain open," Stein said. "We owe that to our musicians, our staff, our patrons, our donors and everyone else who has supported this orchestra."

Information for Musicians, Staff and Patrons

The Symphony is communicating directly with affected musicians and employees about employment status, compensation and benefits.

The Symphony will also notify subscribers and other ticket purchasers about their options as soon as the necessary arrangements are finalized.

Ongoing updates will be posted at www.phoenixsymphony.org/updates.

The Symphony is grateful for the community's longstanding support and commitment to making its music possible.

Those who wish to support efforts to preserve the future of The Phoenix Symphony can find information about contributing at www.phoenixsymphony.org/donate.

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