



Policies & Procedures

**Amended August 2024*

Mississippi State Capitol Building and Grounds

I. INTRODUCTION

These policies govern the presence of members of the public in or about the Mississippi State Capitol Building and Grounds and are promulgated by the Mississippi Department of Finance and Administration (DFA) in accordance with Miss. Code §29-5-1, et seq., which authorizes the DFA to exercise general supervision and care over the building and grounds.

These policies do not govern areas that are controlled by the Mississippi Legislature including but not limited to House and Senate Committee Rooms, 2nd Floor Rotunda/2nd floor Grand Staircase, and House and Senate Chamber. Those areas must be sponsored by a Member of the Legislature. Additionally, these policies may be superseded at any time at the direction of the Mississippi Legislature.

II. DEFINITIONS

A. Mississippi State Capitol Building and Grounds

Unless otherwise specified, The Mississippi State Capitol Building (“Capitol Building”) is limited to the four Exhibit Stations (Station A, B, C, or D) located on the first floor of the building. The State Capitol Grounds (“Capitol Grounds”) includes the South Capitol Steps, the South Capitol Grounds and sidewalks surrounding it, and the Capitol Green Space between the Carroll Gartin Justice Building and the Walter Sillers Building.

B. Event

“Event” includes any press conference, performance, ceremony, presentation, meeting, rally, reception or gathering of people for a common purpose held or caused to be held in the public areas of the Capitol Building or Capitol Grounds.

C. Exhibit

“Exhibit” includes any temporarily attended display, including but not limited to paintings, sculptures, arts and crafts, photographs, or other graphic displays; public service and educational presentations; and historical displays. Exhibits must be displayed at one of the four Exhibit Stations on the first floor of the Capitol Building. Please be mindful of your space at your exhibit station (e.g. No Freestanding televisions, easels, or other items that may impede movement and traffic flow).

D. Event/Exhibit Holder

“Event/Exhibit Holder” means the person, people, or organization which applied and received approval to hold an event or display an exhibit at the Capitol Building or on the Capitol Grounds.

E. Public Areas (Exterior)

The exterior public areas of the Capitol Grounds include the sidewalks, driveways, porticos, exterior walls and surfaces of the building, staircases and the grounds, defined as the property on which the Capitol Building is situated including the green space between the Carroll Gartin Justice Building and the Walter Sillers Building.

F. Public Areas (Interior)

The interior public areas of the Capitol Building include the four Exhibit Stations (Exhibit Station A, Exhibit Station B, Exhibit Station C, or Exhibit Station D) located on the first floor of the building.

G. Public Purpose

Events and exhibits whose primary intended purpose is to promote the interests or general welfare of inhabitants or residents within the state are deemed to be for a public purpose. Events, exhibits and functions which are inherently private in nature are deemed to lack a public purpose, unless the applicant can demonstrate a "public purpose" to the satisfaction of the approving entity. Events including, but not limited to, weddings, private receptions and birthday parties do not serve a public purpose; therefore, they are prohibited in the Capitol Building and on the Capitol Grounds.

III. PROCEDURES FOR EVENT/EXHIBIT RESERVATION REQUESTS

- A. Requests for temporary use of the public areas in the Capitol Building and Grounds which are under the supervision of the DFA must be made:

Online:

<http://www.dfa.ms.gov/reservations/>

By Email:

Reservations@dfa.ms.gov

Or By Phone:

601-359-3402

- B. All requests should be submitted utilizing the online Application for Facility Reservation. The instructions and link to the application may be accessed through the DFA Website: <http://www.dfa.ms.gov/reservations/>
- C. By submitting an application, the Event/Exhibit Holder agrees to comply fully with all the requirements and responsibilities contained in these policies.
- D. Events/Exhibits in the indoor public space will be scheduled only during regular hours of operation 7:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. daily except on Saturdays, Sunday, and holidays. The Capitol Building and Grounds are closed on all observed holidays as declared by the Governor.
- E. Events/Exhibits scheduled outside of regular hours will be scheduled by appointment only with the DFA and are contingent upon the availability of DFA staff and Capitol Police. DFA

and Capitol Police reserve the right to charge to the user any actual costs incurred by their agency for making the facility available "after hours."

IV. EVENT/EXHIBIT APPROVAL CRITERIA FOR THE CAPITOL BUILDING AND GROUNDS

- A. A properly completed application shall be submitted online to the DFA at least ten (10) business days prior to the event/exhibit. The instructions for utilizing the online reservation system as well as the current schedule of reservations may be obtained by visiting the following website: <http://dfa.ms.gov/reservations/>
- B. The event/exhibit must serve a public purpose as defined in Section II (G) of this policy.
- C. DFA Event/Exhibit Reservations are for use of the South Capitol Grounds, South Capitol Steps, or Capitol Building Exhibit Stations only. Event/Exhibit participants will not be allowed to enter the Capitol Building with signs, microphones, or music. Performers/Performances are prohibited in the Capitol Exhibit space.
- D. Any Event/Exhibit during the legislative session shall be limited to one reservation.
- E. Due to the 90-day session, Event/Exhibit Holders are limited to one (1) station and shall be restricted to one reservation. Event/Exhibit holders may select an AM or PM reservation. Groups with similar interests are encouraged to share a space and table.
- F. Exhibit Stations include one eight (8) foot table and two (2) chairs to be used for display space. Please be mindful of the space and do not impede movement and traffic flow within the area. No freestanding televisions, easels or other items that could prevent or block foot traffic are allowed.
- G. Events/Exhibits shall be approved and scheduled by the DFA.
- H. Events/Exhibits shall not be reserved more than one (1) calendar year in advance.
- I. Permits shall be granted on a first come first serve basis.
- J. Events may be held on the South Capitol Grounds, South Capitol Building Steps or the green space between the Carroll Gartin Justice Building and the Walter Sillers Building.
- K. Event/Exhibit Holders must provide examples of all signage and promotional material to be placed in the Capitol Building or on the Capitol Grounds for approval before it may be displayed. Per Miss. Code Ann. §29-5-85 materials may not promote and/or advertise for specific businesses or industries and may not solicit contributions.
- L. Press events/conferences reserved through DFA must be held on the South Capitol Steps. To accommodate the House and Senate convening during the Legislative session, press conferences must conclude before 10:00 a.m., or they can be held between noon and 1:30 p.m. Events may not exceed 30 minutes.
- M. Permits may be revoked or Events/Exhibits will not be approved if they:

1. Request to hold a rally or protest inside the Capitol Building;
2. Shout, chant, or cause any disruption of business within the Capitol Building;
 - a. Should this occur, one warning will be given. If behavior continues, the permit will be revoked and attendees shall be required to leave.
3. Promote a commercial enterprise and/or involve the exchange of money;
4. Obstruct entrances or interrupt traffic flow through the Capitol Grounds or Building;
5. Have the potential to cause damage to state property (including but not limited to, the Capitol Building exterior walls, doors, windows, woodwork, walkways, sidewalks, and Capitol Grounds);
6. Attach any signs, banners, or any other material to the exterior or interior walls of the Capitol Building.
7. Are determined by the DFA to be inappropriate for the historical setting of the Capitol Building and its grounds;
8. Disturb the public peace;
9. Obstruct the view of, or access to, firefighting equipment, fire alarm pull stations, security cameras or fire hydrants;
10. Involve the use of a flammable, hazardous, or odorous chemicals or materials, torches, candles, or other open flame illuminating devices or fires, or any other materials which are determined to be a hazard by the State Fire Marshall;
11. Involve the use of signs or placards attached to objects that might cause damage to the Capitol Building;
12. Interfere with the Legislative session or regular state business conducted in the Capitol Building or Grounds;
13. Offer or expose any article for sale in or on such Capitol Grounds; display a sign, placard or other form of advertisement therein; or solicit fare, alms, subscriptions or contributions therein. **This includes, but is not limited to, signage for businesses and industries who may sponsor events;**
14. Install portable structures, bathroom facilities, barricades, tents, etc. on the Capitol Grounds without prior written consent;

It should be noted that a permit granted under this policy may be revoked for just cause at any time by the DFA or at the request of the Legislature while in session.

V. RESPONSIBILITIES OF EVENT/EXHIBIT HOLDER

- A. The State of Mississippi, including, but not limited to, any of its agencies, agents, officers, officials, or employees shall not be liable for any injury or damage, that may occur to a person or property prior to the start of events, during events, or following events in the Capitol Building or on the Capitol Grounds. Event/Exhibit Holders may be required to obtain liability and property insurance to cover any loss incurred as a result of the event/exhibit.
- B. All exhibits, art, photographic exhibits, banners, streamers, or posters used during an event on the Capitol Grounds must be on freestanding displays. Such material may not be hung from interior or exterior walls or railings. No adhesives or tape of any type will be allowed on any surface.

- C. Standing, climbing, or sitting is **NOT** allowed on any fixture, rail, niche, or ledge. **There are no exceptions to this policy.**
- D. Helium balloons are not allowed inside the Capitol Building.
- E. Food trucks are prohibited on the Capitol Grounds.
- F. **Food is NOT allowed** on the Capitol Grounds. Bottled water may be served.
- G. **Food is NOT permitted** at the Capitol Building Exhibit Stations. There are no exceptions to this policy. Bottled water may be served.
- H. Drawing, painting, discoloring, covering, or writing on the Capitol Grounds or sidewalks with any substance is **not** allowed. Event/Exhibit Holders will be charged for any damage and cleaning caused by failure to comply with this policy.
- I. Stakes, including those for signs or tents, will not be allowed on the Capitol Grounds. Event/Exhibit Holders will be charged for any damage caused by failure to comply with this policy.
- J. The Event/Exhibit Holder is responsible for providing any audio/visual, electrical, computer and communication equipment needed for events and/or exhibits. There is one electrical outlet in each of the exhibit stations
- K. The Event/Exhibit Holder is responsible for cleaning the area immediately after the event. The DFA will inspect the area to determine that it has been adequately cleaned. In the event additional custodial/administrative services are needed, the additional cost may be charged to the Event/Exhibit Holder.
- L. Cancellations must be made via email to reservations@dfa.ms.gov. Please note that cancellations must be made 24 hours prior to the start of the event.
- M. Exhibit Station displays occurring during the Legislative Session must be manned at all times during regular business hours. No event/exhibit shall be left unattended for any reason. The DFA reserves the right to remove any unattended exhibit from the reserved location(s).
- N. The Mississippi State Capitol Building is both a National Historic Landmark and a Mississippi Landmark. The Event/Exhibit Holder will be responsible for any costs incurred by the State of Mississippi and the DFA related to damages resulting from the event and/or exhibit.
- O. Chairs, or other equipment ordinarily required for ceremonies, presentations, or performances may be used only with prior approval by the DFA and shall be furnished, installed, and removed by the Event/Exhibit Holder.

VI. SECURITY

- A. Security must be provided by Capitol Police. If your group has more than 30 attendees, you must request an additional police presence. Requests must be made by the event/exhibit holder directly to Assistant Chief Eddie Washington at the Mississippi Department of Public Safety, Office of Capitol Police at 601-359-3125 at least three (3) weeks before the event. The Event/Exhibit Holder may be responsible for costs associated with additional police presence.

VII. INDEMNIFICATION

- A. The Event/Exhibit Holder agrees to defend, indemnify, and hold harmless the DFA, the State of Mississippi, and all of its officials, officers, agencies, employees, and agents from any and all claims, actions, suits, demands, proceedings, costs, damages, or liabilities brought by any third party which result from the Event/Exhibit Holder's presence, equipment or use of buildings and grounds within the Capitol Building and Grounds.
- B. The Event/Exhibit Holder agrees that the DFA, the State of Mississippi, and all of its officials, officers, agencies, employees, and agents are hereafter relieved of any and all responsibility and liability for any and all injury, loss, or damage the Event/Exhibit Holder, its agents and invitees or their property may incur as a result of or during the Event/Exhibit Holder's use of the Capitol Building and/or Grounds. Therefore, Event/Exhibit Holder on its own behalf and on the behalf of its agents and invitees hereby agrees to hold harmless, indemnify, and defend the DFA, the State of Mississippi, and all of its officials, officers, agencies, employees, and agents from and against any and all costs, damages, fees, expenses, or liability of any type or nature related to the same.
- C. The Event/Exhibit Holder further covenants and agrees to indemnify and to fully pay and reimburse the DFA and the State of Mississippi for any and all costs of repair or replacement of damaged property; and for the restoration and repair of the Capitol Building or Capitol Grounds which in any way is damaged, destroyed, or otherwise defaced or harmed as a result of use by the Event/Exhibit Holder, its agents or invitees.

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