

**Guidelines and Procedures
for the Use of the Maryland State House**

Annapolis, Maryland

[updated August 2026]

The State House Trust

Chair: Aruna Miller, *Lieutenant Governor* [designee of Governor Wes Moore]

Ex officio: William C. Ferguson IV, *President of the Senate*

Joseline Peña-Melnyk, *Speaker of the House of Delegates*

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The State House Trust was created in 1969 to oversee the area inside State Circle in Annapolis, including the State House. This oversight extends to the use of buildings and grounds and any exhibits on display there. The Trust approves all significant improvements, alterations, additions, landscaping, and repairs within that area, and including Lawyers' Mall.

The Trust consists of four ex officio members (or their designees) who serve as trustees. Members of the Trust may appoint from one to three nonvoting associate members who are qualified by experience and interest in historical preservation. The Trust retains an architect as a consultant.

Public Exhibit Areas

Due to the limited exhibit space in the State House, the public exhibit areas are limited to those exhibits that directly relate to the history of the State House or the history of

Maryland in the context of activities of the executive or legislative functions of government that took place in the State House. Exhibits are developed and managed by the Maryland State Archives (Commission on Artistic Property) , in accordance with the State House Visitor Experience Master Plan adopted by the State House Trust in 2007. The Trust prohibits the display of items intended for commercial ventures.

Use of Old House of Delegates Chamber and State House Caucus Room

During the legislative session, it is the prerogative of the Speaker of the House to schedule the use of the Old House Chamber and of the President of the Senate for the State House Caucus Room.

The Trust, through its Secretary, will review all non--state agency requests to use the OldHouse Chamber and the State House Caucus Room. Scheduling of these rooms will remain the responsibility of the Senate President (for the Caucus Room) and the House Speaker (for the Old House Chamber.) Requests for the use of the Old House Chamber and the State House Caucus Room from non-state agencies must be submitted in writing to the Secretary of the Trust. The request must include the nature of the use, number of people expected to attend, the date and time.

Food and drink are usually not permitted in these rooms, nor is smoking permitted in either room (or any part of the State House). The organization submitting the request will be responsible for clean-up and removal of trash. Furniture may not be removed or rearranged without the permission of the Secretary.

Use of the Senate and House Chambers, the Senate and House Lounges, and the Governor's Reception Room

The use of the Senate Chamber and Lounge is the responsibility of the Office of the President of the Senate. The use of the House Chamber and Lounge is the responsibility of the Office of the Speaker of the House. The use of the Governor's Reception Room is the responsibility of the Office of the Governor.

Receptions and other Ceremonial Events

Due to the historical significance of the building and limited space and facilities, the

Trust must confine the use of the State House and grounds to official state functions and events or to business normally conducted in the State House. The Trust will consider the use of the State House by non-state and non-legislative agencies only if such requests are for events which directly relate to the history of the State House. The Trust prohibits the use of the State House for commercial ventures, fundraising activities, or private ceremonies, such as weddings.

Requests for the use of the State House for receptions and/or ceremonies must be submitted in writing to the Secretary of the Trust. Incomplete requests will not be reviewed by the Trust until all required information has been submitted. In order to be considered, the request must include the following:

- 1) the nature and theme of the reception or ceremony
- 2) the number of people expected to attend
- 3) who is to be invited and the criteria for invitations
- 4) proposed date and time
- 5) a floor plan indicating the placement of tables for food and refreshments, chairs, podiums, or sound equipment
- 6) menu, if light refreshments are to be served
- 7) name, address, and phone number of caterer
- 8) a statement of commitment to paying any costs involved in the reception and/or ceremony for clean--up, overtime cost of security, and the cost of any damage to the buildings, grounds, furnishings, or exhibits resulting from the event.

In consideration of the historic nature of the building as well as fire code regulations, the Trust must restrict attendance to receptions or ceremonies on the first floor of the State House to approximately 300 people. Due to limited space and inadequate facilities, food service is confined to cold hors d'oeuvres and light refreshments, and is only allowed to be consumed in the rotunda. Food preparation or cooking in the State House is prohibited. Hard liquor and mixed alcoholic drinks are also prohibited. The organization submitting the request or the caterer contracted for the event is responsible for clean--up and removal of trash.

Smoking is prohibited in the State House. Food and drinks are prohibited in the exhibit areas and the House and Senate Chambers.

An invitation list must be submitted to the Secretary one week prior to any event approved by the Trust for use by building security.

Photography or Filming in the State House

Anyone who wishes to photograph or film in the State House for the purposes of a publication, exhibit, or broadcasting for other than short (less than 3 minutes) public service announcements by state agencies and spontaneous news casts must submit a written proposal to the Secretary of the Trust for consideration by the Trust. Proposals will not be reviewed until all required information has been submitted. In order to be considered, the proposal must include the following:

- 1) purpose of the filming
- 2) proposed date and time, including amount of time needed to complete the filming
- 3) type of equipment to be used, including type of lighting, and the number of people in the film crew
- 4) area(s) in the State House to be filmed.

The Secretary is responsible for scheduling filming activities in the State House in conjunction with the Offices of the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House and staff must be present during filming in the Old House of Delegates Chamber and the Old Senate Chamber. A copy of all videotapes or photographs must be submitted to the Maryland State Archives. The Trust prohibits the use of images of the State House for commercial ventures.

Photography or filming in the State House for personal use is permitted. However, bridal and wedding photography is not permitted in the State House or on the outside steps of the building. The use of the State House grounds for bridal and wedding photography is permitted, but photography must not interfere with pedestrian traffic on the walkways in any way. In addition, care must be taken that no damage is done to the grass or to the landscaping of the grounds.

Public Areas of the State House

The areas of the State House which are accessible to the public from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00

p.m. every day are on the first floor and include: the Old Senate Chamber, the Old House of Delegates Chamber, the Stairwell Room, Senate Committee Room, the Archives Room, the Old House Chamber, the State House Caucus Room and the Rotunda. The State House Office of Interpretation (of the Maryland State Archives) is located on the first floor (Archives Room).

Non--public areas of the State House may only be seen by special arrangement. In the interest of public safety, the State House dome is closed to visitors at all times.

Please address requests for use of the State House or for information to:

Elaine Rice Bachmann, State Archivist
Secretary, State House Trust
The Maryland State Archives
350 Rowe Boulevard
Annapolis, MD 21401
Phone: (410) 260-6402