

Howard County Conservancy at Mt. Pleasant
Event Rentals Q & A

Q: How long is the standard rental period for the day of my event?

A: The standard rental period is 8 hours. You can choose when the rental time starts and finishes, but all events must end before 11pm with clean up ending by midnight. This time frame includes all your setup and breakdown and is the full duration of time that you, your vendors, and your guests can be in the rental space or on the property. Additional hours may be added for \$400 each.

Q: How many people can the Gudelsky Center accommodate?

A: The Gudelsky Center can accommodate up to 150 people seated with tables and chairs. We recommend a guest count closer to 130 to be more comfortable with a larger dance area inside. Up to 200 can be accommodated as a standing cocktail style reception, or a mix of standing and seating, or a mix of indoor and outdoor seating.

Q: How can I arrange a visit to see the Conservancy?

A: Our property is open dawn until dusk every day at no cost. The Gudelsky Building and Nature Center are open Monday through Saturday, 9am until 3pm (closed Saturdays in the winter season). To tour the facility for a special event, please make an appointment. Appointments can be scheduled via [this link](#), or by emailing rentals@howardnature.org.

Q: Can I come in early to decorate?

A: If you need more time to decorate than your 8 hour rental time, you may purchase additional hours for \$400 per hour. All decorating must occur within your scheduled rental time frame. Items cannot be dropped off early, and all items must be taken with you when you leave.

Q: Can I have both my ceremony and reception at The Conservancy?

A: Yes, on the 232 acre property, we have up to 8 ceremony location options (depending on your guest count) including beautiful outdoor gardens and the MontJoy Barn. Receptions may be held in the climate controlled Gudelsky Building. Cocktail hours may be held on the expansive outdoor deck with sweeping garden and woodland views or in the garden which features two waterfalls.

Q: Are there multiple options for ceremony locations?

A: Yes, we have up to 8 different options for ceremony locations, depending on the guest count.

Q: Is there a place for the Bridal Party to get ready?

A: Yes, we have a beautiful historic farmhouse with a restored parlor, bathroom and small kitchenette for bridal parties which may be rented for an additional \$400 for a 4 hour block of time.

Q: What types of tables and chairs do you have?

A: We have 150 Natural Wood Padded Folding chairs, 15 – 60”round tables, 8 – 6’ rectangular tables, and 6 – 36” dual height cocktail tables included in the rental price. These items must remain inside the building or on the deck and are not for outdoor use. There is also a patio set for use on the deck only which has 8 – 42” tables and 24 chairs. Any additional tables and chairs must be separately contracted with an outside vendor.

Q: Do you have any requirements of caterers when they come to The Conservancy?

A: You can use any caterer you would like, but they must be approved by the Conservancy and have a license and general liability insurance, and agree to our policies. The Conservancy does not allow single use plastics or styrofoam.

Q: Do you have a preferred caterers list?

A: We do have a list of event professionals who have supported the Conservancy in the past, most of whom have worked special events at the Conservancy. You may select any licensed caterer you like to work with. If you select a caterer that is not already on this list, they must submit their certificate of insurance and be approved. [View our preferred vendor list here.](#)

Q: Does the Conservancy charge a fee to photographers who want to have a photo session on the grounds?

A: If you are having an event at the Conservancy, there is no fee to take pictures on the grounds. Other professional photographers must purchase a \$150 annual photo pass. This pass gives them access to our calendar where they can view our programs and events. Conservancy events and rentals receive priority access and no other photo shoots can take place at those times.

Q: Is alcohol permitted during event rentals and can I bring my own?

A: Alcohol is permitted during event rentals, typically managed by the caterer. If liquor, including beer and wine, is served for purchase or is included in ticket sales, a one-day permit (liquor license) from the Liquor Board must be obtained by the user by calling the Board of License Commissioner, County Council, at 410-313-2008. Rental clients may purchase and bring their own alcohol to be served to their guests. All alcohol must be served by a bartender who has a current certificate of completion from an Alcohol Awareness Program approved by the state of Maryland.

Q: Is set-up and clean-up included in my rental?

A: Your rental time frame must include time for all of your set up and clean up. You or your caterer are responsible for the set-up and take-down of chairs and tables inside/outside. You must allot enough time for your caterer, decorators, band, DJ, photo booth, florist, etc. to set-up and take-down equipment within your rental time frame. If you feel more time is necessary than your 8 hour rental, you may purchase additional hours for \$400 per hour. If vendors arrive early, or do not break down their equipment within your rental time, a fine will occur.

Q: Is a security deposit required?

A: Yes, a \$1,000 security deposit is required. The deposit is separate from your rental fee and cannot be put toward your rental. If payment is made via check, it will remain on file, and will be shredded within the 30 days following your event as long as you did not exceed your scheduled time frame, contract rules were followed, and there were no damages. If the Security Deposit is made via bank transfer or credit card, the payment will be refunded within 30 days of your event, as long as you did not exceed your scheduled time frame, contract rules were followed and there were no damages. The security deposit is due 1 month before your event date.

Q: What type of payment do you accept?

A: We prefer checks; however, we do accept bank transfers. We also accept credit cards for an additional 3% processing fee.

Q: Are rental clients required to purchase event insurance or hire a day-of coordinator?

A: The Conservancy recommends, but does not require that rental clients purchase event insurance and/or hire a day-of coordinator.

Q: Are there any restrictions on what we can bring in?

A: The Conservancy does not allow the use of single-use plastics (including plastic cups, utensils, and water bottles), glitter, confetti, fireworks, or helium balloons. Please speak to staff for any additional restrictions.

Q: How do we go about booking a rental?

A: The Conservancy requires a \$1,000 non-refundable down payment and a signed contract to reserve a date. The remaining balance is due two months before the event. For a customized contract, please email the Conservancy's rental manager at rentals@howardnature.org.

Q: What other unique options does the Conservancy offer?

A: The Conservancy has many aspects to make your event special: either our Barred Owl, Ranger, our Screech Owl, Belle, or one of our goats are available for a 45 minute "Meet and Greet" for an additional \$400. Guests are also welcome to visit our 5 miles of trails, historic outbuildings, natural children's play area, goats and chickens. Children must be supervised at all times. We also have a new Nature Center that is available to reserve during your event at an additional cost.