

**MANITOWOC COUNTY COURTHOUSE**  
**POLICIES AND PROCEDURES**  
**(AFTER HOURS USE)**

The Manitowoc County Courthouse serves as the seat of county government; is the repository for the county's official records; houses departments that have confidential civil, criminal, juvenile, legal, medical, mental health, and personnel records; and is on the National Register of Historic Places. The Manitowoc County Board of Supervisors has adopted these policies and procedures for non-governmental use of the courthouse in order to protect the interests of Manitowoc County government, the citizens of Manitowoc County, and the courthouse itself.

**USE**

The business of county government takes precedence over any other use of the courthouse. No activity or event may interfere with the operation of county government or any agent, employee, officer, or official in the performance of his or her official duties.

Offices in the courthouse may only be used for county business. Conference rooms may only be used as authorized in the county's Conference Room Usage Policy.

Public space in the courthouse may only be used for non-governmental activities outside of normal courthouse hours and only when authorized by a permit issued by the Public Works Department. Public space means any hallway, lobby, restroom, rotunda, and vending area, unless the area is posted otherwise.

Permits issued by the Public Works Committee are subject to these policies and procedures. The Public Works Committee and Public Works Director may not grant any exceptions unless the exception is specifically authorized by these policies and procedures.

The Public Works Committee, the County Executive, the Sheriff, and the Public Works Director may make last minute changes to any permit and may cancel any permit if necessary to protect the public health, safety, or welfare or if it is in the interest of the county to do so.

**PERMIT APPLICATION**

Any person who wishes to use public space in the courthouse must apply for a permit at least 2 weeks prior to the proposed use. Scheduling is on a "first come,

first served” basis, and applicants are encouraged to apply as far in advance as possible.

The application must be on a form approved by the Public Works Committee and must explain the nature of the proposed activity or event, which must be consistent with the decorum due the seat of county government and with the appropriate, non-disruptive use of a public facility.

An applicant must provide a description, sketch, or photo of any proposed display, equipment, or other item that will be brought into the courthouse in connection with the proposed event as part of the application. Any item brought into the courthouse must be appropriate to the courthouse.

The Public Works Committee will consider permit applications at regularly scheduled meetings. The Public Works Committee may, but is not required to, hold a special meeting to consider a permit application.

If the application is denied, the Public Works Committee will provide the applicant with a written statement of the reason for the denial. If an item or any portion of an item is deemed inappropriate, the Public Works Committee will provide the applicant with a written statement of the reason that the item was deemed inappropriate.

## **FEES**

The applicant must submit a fee of \$100 with the application to cover the cost of processing the application.

The county will determine the estimated cost of providing county services in connection with a proposed event that are in excess of the costs that would be incurred by county departments in the absence of the event. The estimated costs will be based on information from appropriate county departments, including, but not limited to the Personnel, Public Works, and Sheriff’s Departments.

The Public Works Committee will notify the applicant of the estimated costs and may require prepayment of all or part of the estimated costs.

If the application is approved, the applicant must submit a security deposit of \$250 within 5 days of the approval.

## **PERMIT HOLDER RESPONSIBILITIES**

The permit holder is responsible for paying all costs in connection with a proposed event, including any costs incurred by the county for services that are in

excess of the costs that would be incurred by county departments in the absence of the event.

The permit holder assumes responsibility for all activities conducted in connection with the event, including supervision and control to prevent injury or damage; conduct during the event; maintenance of the premises in connection with the permitted use; and coordination with the Public Works Department.

The permit holder must comply with all applicable federal, state, county, and city ordinances, policies, procedures, regulations, rules, and statutes.

The permit holder agrees that it will not in any way, directly or indirectly, discriminate against any person because of ancestry, age, color, creed, disability, family status, handicap, income, marital status, national origin, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, or any other status protected by federal, state, county, and city ordinances, policies, procedures, regulations, rules, and statutes.

The permit holder agrees to indemnify, hold harmless, and defend Manitowoc County and its agents, employees, officers, and officials against any and all damages or claims that arise because of the issuance of a permit, the permitted event, or the placement of any display, equipment, or other item in connection with the event.

The permit holder must meet with the Public Works Director prior to the event to determine the placement of any equipment.

The permit holder is responsible for any damage to the courthouse, the courthouse grounds, or county property that arises in connection with the permitted use. The Public Works Director will notify the permit holder of any such damage and the cost of repairs.

## **INSURANCE AND LIABILITY**

The permit holder must have insurance coverage of at least \$1,000,000 per occurrence for bodily injury and \$250,000 per occurrence for property damage. The insurance policy must preclude any right of subrogation against the county and its agents, employees, officers, and officials.

The permit holder must provide a certificate of insurance to the county at least two weeks in advance of the scheduled event. The certificate must name the county and its agents, employees, officers, and officials as an additional insured.

The county is not responsible for the theft or damage to any property that the permit holder brings onto the courthouse grounds or into the courthouse.

## **PERSONNEL AND SECURITY**

The permit holder is required to pay any extra personnel costs incurred by the county in connection with the event, including clean up after the event.

The permit holder is required to pay for building security during the period that any person is in the courthouse in connection with the event, including periods of setup, take down, and clean up. At least two sheriff's deputies are required to provide adequate security for any event in the courthouse. The Public Works Committee or the Sheriff may require that additional officers be present depending on the nature of the event and the number of persons attending.

## **EQUIPMENT, FACILITIES, AND SAFETY**

The courthouse is not equipped or staffed to provide the amenities normally associated with conference centers and other venues that specialize in providing space and support for banquets, conferences, meetings, seminars, and similar events.

Requests for equipment or support services must be made in advance and should be included in the permit application. Requests received on the date of use will not be honored. The county will only provide such equipment and support services as it has expressly stated in writing that it will provide.

No county equipment may be moved or used without the express written permission of the Public Works Director and no county equipment may be removed from the courthouse.

Electrical wires must be secured by tape or other means so that they do not present a safety hazard.

Equipment such as chairs, display boards, and tables, that the permit holder brings into the courthouse must have soft rubber feet to prevent sliding and scratching floors.

The elevator must be used to transport equipment between floors unless written permission is granted by the Public Works Director.

The permit holder is responsible for the set up and take down of all displays, equipment, and other items.

The permit holder is required to clean up any trash before vacating the courthouse. If the permit holder fails to remove trash, the county will do so and the permit holder will be required to pay the cost of doing so.

## **SPECIFIC PROHIBITIONS**

An applicant may not advertise the use of the courthouse for an event until it has been issued a permit, except when authorized to do so by the Public Works Committee.

Alcoholic beverages are not permitted in the courthouse or on the courthouse grounds.

Candles and other open flame sources are not permitted in the courthouse or on the courthouse grounds.

Display, sale, and vending of any commercial article or product is prohibited.

Firearms, ammunition, ordinance, and other dangerous weapons are prohibited, except for law enforcement or military personnel acting within the scope of official duties.

Gambling and gambling machines are prohibited.

Grills and open fires are not permitted in the courthouse or on the courthouse grounds.

Helium balloons are not permitted in the courthouse.

Monetary contributions may not be collected or solicited in connection with a permitted use of the courthouse unless specifically requested in the application and specifically authorized by the county in writing. The Public Works Committee may authorize use of the courthouse by a nonprofit organization for fund-raising purposes. The courthouse may not be used for any for-profit or commercial activity without the express written permission of the county board.

No animal, other than a service animal, is permitted in the courthouse.

No item, including banners, may be draped, glued, hung, pasted, taped, or in any other manner affixed to any part of the courthouse without specific permission of the Public Works Director. The term "any part of the courthouse" means both the interior and exterior of the courthouse, is to be broadly construed, and includes, but is not limited to ceilings, doors, elevators, fixtures, floors, furniture, glass, lighting, posts, railings, and walls.

No one may enter any courtroom, office, any other nonpublic area of the courthouse unless the person is, or is accompanied by, a county agent, employee, officer, or official in the performance of his or her official duties.

No one may obstruct any entrance or exit to the courthouse or the entrance or exit to any office in the courthouse.

No physical alterations to the courthouse are permitted.

Political activity is not permitted. Political activity includes the activities of a partisan or nonpartisan candidate, political organizations, and political parties. Political activity also includes advocacy for or against any ballot measure or referendum.

Red beverages, food, and liquids are not permitted in the courthouse because of the possibility of staining of marble and other materials.

Smoking cigarettes, cigars, and pipes and the use of any other tobacco product is prohibited.

Sticks, poles, and lathes may not be used to carry any sign or placard into the courthouse, except when carried by an authorized county employee.

Use of the county seal by a permit holder in connection with any permitted event is prohibited.

Use of the courthouse grounds is prohibited except for entering and exiting the courthouse; loading and unloading items in connection with the event; and parking.

## **VEHICLES AND PARKING**

Parking is permitted on a space-available basis in the lots to the west of the courthouse and north of Hancock Street. The permit holder, workers, and visitors must comply with all posted parking regulations, unless a specific exemption is allowed. Violators may be ticketed or towed, or both.

No vehicle may be driven or parked on any sidewalk or lawn on the courthouse grounds except for the specific purpose of loading or unloading in areas that have been designated by the Public Works Director. A vehicle may be driven or parked on a sidewalk or lawn only for the period of time that it takes to load or unload. Any vehicle driven or parked on a sidewalk or lawn in violation of this provision may be ticketed or towed, or both.

Any vehicle that is permitted to drive on a sidewalk may not operate in excess of 5 miles per hour. Any person operating a vehicle in violation of this speed limit will be required to immediately remove the vehicle, will be prohibited from using any vehicle on any sidewalk, and may be subject to further enforcement action.

No vehicle may block or interfere with pedestrian use of a sidewalk.

## **WEDDINGS**

Weddings are limited to fifty people or less. Wedding receptions are not allowed. Birdseed, bubbles, rice, and other items may not be used or thrown in the courthouse or on the courthouse grounds. No rooms are available for changing.

The county does not provide the amenities normally associated with venues that specialize in providing space for weddings. Some chairs may be available and a request to use them must be included in the application. If chairs permission is granted, set up and take down are the responsibility of the permit holder.

Weddings may be performed in courtrooms during normal courthouse hours. Persons attending a wedding may assemble in public spaces in the courthouse prior to and after the ceremony provided that they do not interfere with courthouse operations. Insurance and security personnel are not required for weddings performed in courtrooms during normal courthouse hours.

## **RESERVATION OF RIGHTS**

The county reserves the right to refuse to permit the courthouse for any event that may compromise the security of the courthouse, the safety of courthouse employees, or the safety of the public.

The county reserves the right to cancel, move, or preempt any permitted event and the county may, when acting in good faith, exercise this right without penalty or liability to the permit holder.

The county reserves the right for any county agent, employee, officer, or official to access and enter the courthouse during a permitted event.

The county reserves the right to remove and dispose of any unauthorized display, equipment, or item and to correct or eliminate any hazardous situation. The county will charge the permit holder for the costs of doing so.

The issuance of a permit does not constitute approval or endorsement of an activity or event, of the group conducting the activity or event, or of the group's purpose.

## **QUESTIONS**

Any questions about these policies and procedures and the after hours use of the courthouse should be directed to the Public Works Director at 920-683-4054.