



Town of Topsfield
**POLICY FOR USE OF THE PUBLIC HALL
AT THE TOPSFIELD TOWN HALL**

Topsfield's Public Hall, located in the historic Town Hall Building at 8 West Common Street ("Public Hall") is primarily available for official business use by Town departments, committees, boards, commissions and officials. When not in use by the Town, the Public Hall may be used by non-profit, charitable or civic groups and individuals or organizations for the educational, social, cultural or overall benefit of the Community, but not for religious services. No political fundraising shall be allowed per state law. Preference for use of the Public Hall shall be given in the following order:

- Town departments/boards/commissions/elementary school
- Tri-town non-profits
- Private non-commercial purposes – Topsfield Resident as Applicant
- Other non-profits
- Private non-commercial purposes – Non-Resident as Applicant
- Commercial purposes

The use of the Public Hall shall be in accordance with these policies and procedures and any others established by the Board of Selectmen. Use of the Public Hall does not constitute or imply endorsement by the Town's policies, activities, or the points of view expressed by participants. No advertisements or announcements implying such endorsement shall be permitted. The Board of Selectmen, or the Town Administrator as its designee, shall administer the provisions of this policy, and in connection therewith, may deny or withdraw permission to use the Public Hall to any group or organization that fails to comply with such policies and procedures.

A. GENERAL GUIDELINES:

1. Town departments and official Town committees will have the highest priority.
2. Activities within the Public Hall shall not interfere with town business operations.
3. Town Hall regular business hours are 8:00am to 4:00pm Monday through Thursday and 8:00am to 12:00 Noon on Fridays. The Town reserves the right to alter or change hours in accordance with the policies of the Board of Selectmen.
4. The maximum capacity of the Public Hall is not to exceed 126 (with tables/chairs) or 200 (with auditorium style seating), and subject to any additional limitations to protect the public health and safety that may be imposed by the Police Chief or Fire Chief within their respective areas of jurisdiction.

5. Requests for accommodations pursuant to the Americans with Disabilities Act (“ADA”) with respect to use of the Public Hall shall be included on the Public Hall Use Application or made to the Facility Coordinator or ADA Compliance Officer.
6. Smoking, use of tobacco or marijuana products, use of a device that heats up and vaporizes a liquid or solid, including but not limited to an e-cigarette or similar product, and the possession of illegal drugs, are strictly prohibited in the Public Hall, or in Town Hall or on its grounds.
7. Use of alcoholic products or beverages, except as may be consistent with any license granted for such purposes, is strictly prohibited in the Public Hall, or in Town Hall or on its grounds.
8. During events which include food service, animals are prohibited, with the exception of service animals, pursuant to the 2013 Federal Food Code, Chapter 6, section 501.115.
9. All applicants shall sign a release and hold harmless agreement, releasing and indemnifying the Town from any and all claims arising from the use of Town Hall by the applicant and its invitees.

B. FACILITIES USE:

1. The applicant assumes full responsibility for the preservation of order in and about the building and grounds with respect to their invitees’ use of the Public Hall. A police detail shall be required for any gathering at which alcohol will be served and for any anticipated gathering of 100 people or more; provided, however, that the Police Chief may require a police detail for smaller gatherings or require additional details based upon public health and safety considerations. The Town reserves the right to detail additional officers at the expense of the rental party, and with no advance notice, if, in opinion of the assigned police detail additional officers are needed. The expense for any detail shall be paid in full by the applicant for use of the Public Hall, and the cost thereof is addressed in Section F, establishing fees.
2. A custodian (for Tiers B-F) will be on duty at all times when the building is in use, which costs shall be included in the rental fee for use of the Public Hall.
3. The use of the Public Hall is confined to the areas noted in the application and only for the time(s) stipulated. Access to all other areas of Town Hall is strictly prohibited. Failure to leave the premises at the appointed time will result in additional fees for employee overtime costs.
4. Users will utilize the restroom facilities on the second-floor level only, near the elevator.
5. Permission to use the Public Hall shall be granted exclusively to the applicant and may not be assigned to another.
6. Adult sponsors must be present for youth groups' activities. One adult shall be present at all times for every ten (10) participants eighteen years of age and younger.
7. Open flames, pyrotechnic display, sparking devices, smoke machines or other ignited products are prohibited in the Public Hall and on Town property.
8. Participants or guests may not use any wheeled equipment inside the Public Hall or on Town property surrounding the Town Hall, including but not limited to skateboards, wheelie shoes or scooters, but excluding wheelchairs and other accessibility devices.
9. No private sale of concessions or other items will be allowed without prior written approval.
10. No materials shall be affixed, pinned, taped, fastened, or otherwise, to the walls, curtains, woodwork or floor.
11. Ten (10) round tables, six (6) rectangular tables and one-hundred fifty (150) chairs are available upon request and subject to availability. Six (6) rectangular tables and thirty (30) chairs will be available in the Hall with no set up charge. If additional tables or chairs are

required, a cost for set-up and breakdown shall be added to the fee for use of the Public Hall as set forth in the section on fees.

12. The Town may make Internet and wifi access available, and a request for the same shall be included in the Public Hall Use Application.
13. Town Hall has fifty-five (55) parking spaces and two (2) handicap parking spaces. Entrance and exit for all attendees shall be from the main entrance accessible from High Street Extension.
14. A written layout of the desired setup of tables and chairs shall be provided to the Facilities Use Coordinator at least five (5) business days prior to the scheduled use.

C. RESERVATIONS:

1. Public Hall use will be scheduled on a first-come, first served basis.
2. In the event there is a same day scheduling conflict, preference for scheduling will be given in the following order:
 - Tier A: Town departments/boards/commissions/elementary schools
 - Tier B: Tri-town non-profits
 - Tier C: Private non-commercial purposes – Topsfield Residents
 - Tier D: Other non-profits
 - Tier E: Private non-commercial purposes – Non Residents and All Others
 - Tier F: Commercial purposes
3. The Public Hall will be available for use as follows:
 - Tier A: Business and non-business hours.
 - Tier B: Business hours (quiet use).
 - Tiers B, C, D, E and F: Non-business hours:
 - Monday-Thursday: 5:00 pm to 10:00 pm
 - Friday: 1:00 pm to 11:00 pm
 - Saturday: 8:00 am to 11:00 pm
 - Sunday: 8:00 am to 10:00 pm
4. Applications shall be in writing and submitted to Facility Coordinator's Office as follows:
 - a. Not less than two (2) weeks and not more than twelve (12) months in advance of the proposed use time; or
 - b. Not less than thirty (30) calendar days and not more than twelve (12) months if also requesting a Pouring License for the use.
5. Applications may be obtained online from the Town Website: www.topsfield-ma.gov or in person from the Facility Coordinator's Office. Questions should be addressed to Donna Rich at drich@topsfield-ma.gov or 978-887-1504.
6. Once an application is received, a temporary reservation shall be made for the requested date. Temporary reservations shall be held for a maximum of twenty (20) business days to allow the applicant to obtain any necessary approvals (Police Chief, Fire Chief, Board of Health Agent), make final payment (if a Police or Fire detail is required) and provide an insurance binder, or the reservation will be released.
7. Non-profit entities shall provide proof of their non-profit status with their application.
8. If requested, a security deposit to the Town of Topsfield shall be provided.
9. The Town of Topsfield reserves the right to cancel, at the discretion of the Board of Selectmen, or the Town Administrator as its designee, without advance notice due to reasonable needs of

the Town, severe inclement weather conditions or emergency situations. If this occurs, a full refund will be made.

10. In the event an applicant fails to follow the established policies and procedures, future use of the Public Hall may be denied and/or a security deposit may be required.
11. The Board of Selectmen, in consultation with the Town Administrator, shall annually determine the fees to be assessed for use of the Public Hall.

D. LIABILITY INSURANCE:

1. Full liability for any damages to the Town Hall, or injuries to persons, whether in the Town Hall or on the town grounds surrounding the Town Hall, shall be assumed by the applicant. Applicant agrees to take the utmost care and to make good any damage or loss to the town.
2. For all events, a \$1,000,000 insurance binder naming the Town of Topsfield, its officers, agents, and employees as an additional insured against any and all liability arising or resulting from your usage of said premises. This binder must be submitted to the Facility Use Coordinator within twenty (20) business days of email confirmation of the reservation else the hold on the reservation will be released. The insurance must cover a minimum limit of \$1,000,000 Combined Limit for bodily injury and property damage.
3. All applicants must complete an indemnification form agreeing to reimburse or hold harmless the Town, its officers, agents, and employees thereof from any such loss, damage or claim, including, but not limited to, it or their attorney's fees. And, to pay any attorney's fees and costs paid or incurred by the Town to enforce any obligation imposed under this paragraph or otherwise in the application.

E. ALCOHOL POLICIES:

The following policies are applicable to events at which alcohol will be served, and are subject to any additional terms and conditions imposed by any applicable license:

1. All applicable state, local, and federal laws and regulations with respect to alcoholic beverages must be adhered to by the applicant and guests.
2. Minors under 21 years of age may never handle or consume alcoholic beverages on Town Hall property.
3. No open containers of alcohol are allowed outside of the Public Hall.
4. No alcohol shall be stored on the premises before or after the event.
5. No self-service of alcoholic beverages shall be permitted.
6. For Tiers B-F alcoholic beverages shall be served only by a TIPS-certified server;
7. For Tiers B-F an applicant may either hire a caterer with TIPS-certified bartenders or if they are a non-profit, apply for a One Day Special Wine/Malt Beverage License with TIPS-certified bartenders.
8. Proof of \$1,000,000 (\$1Million) insurance with Liquor Liability Coverage and Town of Topsfield, its officials, agents and employees, as Additional Insured for Tiers B-F.
9. The serving of alcohol must stop ½ hour before the scheduled end time of the event as it appears on the application.

E. HOURLY RENTAL FEES:

For purposes of the below chart, "Weekday" non-business hours are Monday through Thursday, and "Weekend" non-business hours are Friday through Sunday. Weekday rentals

shall be subject to a two (2) hour minimum. Weekend rentals shall be subject to a four (4) hour minimum.

PUBLIC HALL HOURLY RENTAL FEES			
TIER	Town Hall Business Hours	Non-Business Hours	
		Weekday (M-Th)	Weekend (F-Su)
A	\$0	\$0	\$0
B	\$0	\$35	\$55
C	n/a	\$55	\$75
D	n/a	\$75	\$100
E	n/a	\$100	\$125
F	n/a	\$100	\$125

G. OTHER FEES:

In addition to the applicable hourly Rental Fees, additional fees may be required for events occurring during non-business hours. The following fees are applicable to Tiers B-F:

- Set up/break down of tables/chairs** (if needed): \$50 (for events with 50 or fewer people) or \$100 (for events with 51 or more people).
- Cleaning Fees:** All rentals (Tiers B-F) with more than 15 people in attendance will have a base cleaning fee of \$30. When food or beverages are served, an additional \$30 will be charged for events with 1-99 people or an additional \$60 with 100 or more people are in attendance.
- Police Details:** A detail officer shall be required when there are 100 or more people are in attendance *and* alcohol is served, and otherwise in accordance with this policy. The cost for a Police Detail is \$52 per hour per Officer plus a 10% administrative fee. Officers are assigned in 4-hour increments.
- Fire Details:** A Fire Detail may be required to ensure public safety. The Fire Chief shall have the final determination on whether such personnel is required, and the number of such personnel. The cost for a Fire Detail is \$52 per hour per firefighter/EMT plus a 10% administrative fee. Firefighters/EMTs are assigned in 4-hour increments.
- Returned Checks:** Any checks returned due to insufficient funds will incur a charge of \$25.

H. PAYMENT/CANCELLATIONS/REFUNDS:

- Payment by check for the rental fee, cleaning fee, and set up/break down fee (if necessary) is required at the time the application is received. Checks shall be made payable to the Town of Topsfield.
- Final payment (for a Police or Fire detail) is required in full within twenty (20) business days of the application being received.
- If a cancellation is made thirty (30) or more days in advance of event, a full refund, less a one hundred (\$100) dollar cancellation fee to cover administrative and other costs will be issued.
- If a cancellation is less than thirty (30) days in advance, no refund will be issued to allow the Town to cover administrative and other costs.

5. A fifty (\$50) dollar change fee will be assessed if a date change is requested more than ten (10) business days after the application was received.
6. If the Town of Topsfield cancels in accordance with this policy, a full refund will be issued within ten (10) business days.

I. THEATER & STAGE GUIDELINES:

1. For those groups requiring the use of the stage for a theatrical performance or other activity: sets, wardrobes and other equipment are not to be stored in the Public Hall or adjacent areas, except when performances are scheduled on successive days.
2. Painting and construction of sets is not permitted in the Public Hall.
3. All scenery used for a performance and decorations, fixtures, etc., must conform with applicable fire safety laws, regulations and procedures. All materials must be removed from the building immediately after use or stored in the adjacent area when performances are scheduled on successive days.
4. The Fire Department shall be contacted for their review and approval of any scenery, decorations, fixtures, etc. to determine conformance with fire and public safety standards.
5. If a firefighter is required to be on the premises during any event, the Applicant is required arrange for the detail directly through the Fire Department.

J. FOOD RELATED GUIDELINES:

1. The applicant shall indicate on the Public Hall Use Application whether it requests use of the kitchen facilities.
2. Applicants using the kitchen and serving food must receive appropriate prior approval from the Board of Health, as applicable, including any necessary food service permit.
3. All approved food and beverages shall be served and consumed only in the Public Hall area.
4. During events in which the food that is being served was prepared in a kitchen that was not subject to regulation inspection by the regulatory authority, a visible placard shall be clearly displayed stating this fact.
5. Applicants shall be required to return the kitchen to a clean and sanitary condition.
6. Users shall be responsible for providing their own cooking/eating utensils and cleaning supplies.