



IN REPLY REFER TO:

# United States Department of the Interior

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE  
Jefferson National Expansion Memorial  
11 North Fourth Street  
St. Louis, Missouri 63102-1882

## **SPECIAL USE PERMIT GUIDELINES FOR AFTER-HOURS WEDDINGS AT THE OLD COURTHOUSE**

Many requests are received from a variety of groups wanting to use the Jefferson National Expansion Memorial for various reasons. When such requests are inappropriate, they are denied. Frequently, because of lack of space, funds, manpower, etc., even appropriate uses have to be denied; however, **compatible, non-commercial (does not involve the buying and selling of goods or services)** use of the Old Courthouse, the Arch Visitor Center, and the Memorial grounds is permitted from time to time through a Special Use Permit. This is the document issued by the Superintendent to an individual or organization to allow use of National Park Service-administered resources. A compatible use is defined as an activity not specifically prohibited by legislation and is in accordance with the purpose and the land classification of the area and National Park Service policies. **This guideline specifically covers requests for Special Use Permits authorizing use of the Old Courthouse for after-hours weddings.**

As a matter of information to you regarding after-hours events at the Jefferson National Expansion Memorial (Gateway Arch or Old Courthouse), the possibility exists for the cancellation of all after-hours special events due to a national or regional crisis related to terrorism. Because the Memorial has been designated as one of the “icon” parks within our nation that may be targeted for terrorist activity, the status of the Memorial’s operations is linked directly to the national threat level declared by the Office of Homeland Security; or, in some cases, by the Director of the National Park Service. At the “Red” (highest) level,” when there is a severe risk of terrorist attack, a full scale closure will go into effect. That would necessitate the immediate and complete closure of the Memorial. At the “Orange” and “Yellow” levels, closure of any portion of the Memorial’s facilities may be considered on a case-by-case basis or day-by-day basis. The Superintendent will make that decision based upon the specific situation and local conditions as changes occur. We are providing this information to you as a courtesy in case you wish to consider other alternatives.

Major events not open to the general public must be held after established operating hours. The Old Courthouse is open 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., daily. The Old Courthouse is closed Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Year's Day.

**From mid-November through early January, the Old Courthouse Rotunda is decorated for a Victorian Christmas celebration and contains a 25-foot tall Christmas tree. From approximately June 10 through July 10, the Rotunda contains extensive Victorian period patriotic red, white and blue decorations, with a huge 33-star Garrison flag hung in the center, in celebration of Flag Day and Independence Day. Keep this in mind when planning your event.**

### **WHO MAY APPLY**

Any individual who will assume responsibility for the gathering or event may apply for a Special Use Permit.

### **REQUESTING A SPECIAL USE PERMIT**

Requests for Special Use Permits should be made in writing to the Superintendent at the above letterhead address at least 90 days prior to the date of the event. Please include the following information in your application letter:

1. Name, address, and phone number of permittee.
2. A description of the event, including whether or not flowers and music will be used.
3. Date and time guests will arrive and depart (**event may begin no earlier than 5:00 p.m., and facility must be cleaned and vacated by 8:00 p.m.**)
4. Number of guests anticipated.

### **ISSUING A SPECIAL USE PERMIT**

When a written request for permission to use the Old Courthouse is received, along with the required **\$200.00 non-refundable deposit**, a decision will be made to allow or deny special usage based on appropriateness, availability, timeliness, size of crowd, etc. If the use is to be permitted, a Special Use Permit outlining conditions governing the special usage, payment of the balance of the fee, and insurance requirements will be completed and sent to the requester. If request is to be denied, a letter explaining denial will be sent to requester and the deposit will be returned.

Permittee must sign and return the permit for the Authorizing Official's signature.

After signing by the Authorizing Official, the completed permit will be forwarded to permittee along with a letter outlining how to proceed with the planning and execution of their special activity.

#### **PARK USAGE FEE--**

**A \$1,050 usage fee is charged for a formal after-hours wedding in the Old Courthouse. A non-refundable down payment of \$200 is required to reserve a date on the park calendar and should be enclosed with your written request for a Special Use Permit; the remaining balance of \$850 is due seven (7) working days prior to the date of your event. Please make check payable to National Park Service and include your Social Security Number or Tax Identification Number on your check. NO REMINDERS WILL BE SENT.** If the deadline is not met, the permit will be void and notice of such will be sent. If you must cancel the event, please do so in writing at least seven (7) working days prior to the event date. In addition, all other details relative to your event must be finalized no later than seven (7) working days prior to the date of your event--no exceptions will be made.

#### **FACILITY USAGE REQUIREMENTS**

##### **LIABILITY INSURANCE--**

To limit exposure to liability, the permittee agrees to save, hold harmless, defend and indemnify the United States of America. **A Certificate of General Liability Insurance in the amount of \$500,000 is required. The insurer must include the NATIONAL PARK SERVICE AS AN ADDITIONAL INSURED for the period of the permit (this must be specified in writing on the Certificate of Insurance form).** Proof of insurance is required 45 days prior to the date of the event. The National Park Service reserves the right to require the posting of security either in the form of cash or bond to insure performance in accordance with the terms of the permit to cover such costs as restoration, rehabilitation, and cleanup of the area used, and other costs resulting from the special park use.

##### **CLEANING--**

To insure that the facility is ready for early morning park visitors, the permittee must arrange for an acceptable professional cleaning company to clean all areas used. **Cleanup must be accomplished and building cleared by 8:00 p.m.** Your cleaning contractor will need 1-2 hours, depending on the weather, to accomplish this cleanup. Set wedding ceremony time and length accordingly, e.g., 6 p.m. or 6:30 p.m. **A meeting is required among the Chief of Facilities Management (314-655-1600), the permittee or their representative, and the cleaning company representative to discuss the event logistics and clean-up requirements. This meeting must be attended by all parties and must be scheduled at least one month prior to the date of your event.**

##### **RENTALS--**

All items needed for the wedding ceremony are to be provided by the permittee, except the use of park chairs. Approximately 140 park chairs are available to for use providing permittee takes responsibility for set up and take down. **Park chairs cannot be mixed with rental chairs.** If the number of chairs available is not enough, **all** chairs must be rented and brought in at permittee's expense. All items used for the ceremony, including flowers, must be removed from the premises at the conclusion of the permit. **Setup and delivery of items may begin no earlier than 4:30 p.m., at which time the facility closes to the public.**

##### **REHEARSALS--**

If necessary, permittee may request time for wedding rehearsal in the Rotunda providing the following conditions are agreed to: 1) **rehearsal time of 4 p.m. to 5 p.m., ONLY on the day preceding the wedding day must be scheduled at your final meeting with the Chief of Facilities Management Office (rehearsal must conclude by 5 p.m.--no exceptions will be made)**; 2) musician and/or soloist may not rehearse until after 4:30 p.m., when facility closes to the public; and, 3) Rotunda must be used "as is" for rehearsal.

#### **ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS/LIMITATIONS**

The first floor of the Old Courthouse Rotunda is available for after-hours wedding ceremonies, with guests also being allowed to view the ceremony from the second level balcony. No more than 200 people will be permitted. (Special Exhibit Galleries, Courtrooms, Theater, Gift Shop, and the exhibit galleries on early St. Louis history) will be closed during wedding events at the Old Courthouse.)

In planning your ceremony, please keep in mind that **ONLY** the National Park Service space, staff, equipment and supplies specifically outlined in this permit, are available for your use. To assure coordination with the National Park Service staff, please designate someone to act as your representative for the event, someone who has full authority to act in your behalf. You must designate doorkeepers to identify and to admit your guests throughout the event. Only one entrance will be opened for guest arrival and departure.

Official wedding photographer may take photographs no higher than second level balcony.

Outdoor release of helium-filled balloons within the National Park System is prohibited. These balloons inevitably fall back to earth where they create hazardous conditions for marine wildlife and also create additional litter problems.

**THE THROWING OF RICE, BIRDSEED, FLOWER PETALS, BUBBLES, ETC., IS STRICTLY PROHIBITED.**

**Open flame is prohibited (no lighted candles).** Smoking is prohibited inside the Old Courthouse. Please note also that the Old Courthouse Rotunda is **not** air-conditioned. Food and drink are not permitted under this permit. (Wedding receptions are covered under separate guidelines.)

If requested, and available, the conference room, theater, or one of the west wing exhibit galleries may be used as the bridal party staging area. There is no mirror in any of these rooms.

These guidelines and fees are subject to change without notice. For additional information, please contact the Park Permits Office at 314-655-1613.