

GUIDELINES FOR BUILDING USE AT ONEONTA HISTORY CENTER & MUSEUM

Greater Oneonta Historical Society

The Oneonta History Center & Museum (OHCM), home to the Greater Oneonta Historical Society (GOHS), is located at 183 Main Street in the oldest brick building in downtown Oneonta. The first floor of the building houses GOHS's permanent exhibition (*Small Community, Big Ideas: Greater Oneonta*) and rotating special exhibits, the Sally Mullen Children's Corner, GOHS's gift shop, historical player piano, and administrative space. The second floor, currently closed to the public, houses GOHS's archival, object, and library collections.

GOHS completed its renovation of OHCM's historic third-floor ballroom space in fall 2025. Once the location for local community gatherings, events, balls, and live music, the space had been unused and inactive since the mid-1950s. To wit, streamers had remained hanging from the walls and doorways, believed to be left over from an inauguration celebration for President Eisenhower in 1953. The renovation of the ballroom has created a new, multi-use cultural space with eco-friendly infrastructure, ADA compliant bathrooms, and a kitchenette, while still embracing and preserving the ballroom's historic charm and appeal.

The OHCM historic ballroom is now available as a rental venue, suitable for community meetings, lectures and speaker series, corporate functions, celebratory events, and other gatherings.

This document outlines GOHS's venue rental policies, guidelines, and rates.

1. General Facility Information

- The OHCM Historic Ballroom can serve as a venue for a variety of functions and is available as a rental facility to nonprofit and other organizations, corporations, government agencies/officials, individuals, and other entities.
- The Ballroom has an occupancy capacity of 83 (per fire code) and can be set up for different purposes (audience style, conference style, receptions, luncheons/dinners with table settings, etc.).
- The third-floor facility, accessible via elevator, includes two ADA compliant bathrooms and a kitchenette (refrigerator, dish washer, sink, cabinetry, countertop).

2. Setup, Equipment, Staffing

- Rental agreement includes, as needed, use of chairs and tables, a podium, and sound system. Setup will be determined in advance and delineated in the rental agreement.
- Setup and cleanup times are included in the agreed-upon rental period and fee.
- Decorations are generally restricted to those that can be tabletop or standalone (e.g., flowers, place cards, balloons, standalone displays). Tape, glue, nails, glitter, confetti, open flames, smoke machines are prohibited.
- For reservations outside regular operating hours (see [GOHS website](#)), GOHS staff and/or an authorized representative(s) must be on site for the duration of the event; additional fees may apply should additional staffing be necessary depending on event type, timing, and other details.

3. Food, Beverages/Alcohol

- Food and beverages are provided by the renter and/or outside caterers and must be specified in the rental agreement.
- A permit is required for events at which alcohol is to be served (for either catered events or individually purchased for consumption).¹

4. Safety, Conduct, Cleaning/Trash

- Emergency exits must remain unobstructed.
- Additional staff/personnel (other than specified in 2, above) may be required for larger events.
- Renter must comply with local noise restrictions/regulations.
- Disorderly conduct and/or illegal activity are strictly prohibited.
- There is no smoking or vaping allowed anywhere in the building.
- Renter must remove any allowed decorations, trash, and personal items.
- An additional cleaning fee may apply if venue is not returned to original condition.

5. Liability & Damages

- Renter is responsible to the GOHS for the use and care of the facilities, and agrees to defend, indemnify, and hold GOHS from and against all liability, loss, damages, claims, or actions for bodily injury and/or property damage arising out of or in connection with the use of GOHS's property, facilities and/or services.
- Renter releases venue from claims arising from event activities.
- GOHS staff and/or officers will perform post-event inspection.
- Costs for repair of any damage or more than normal clean-up will be deducted from the deposit, if applicable, and/or otherwise charged to the renter.

6. Rental Fees & Payment

- Basic venue rental rates are established based on type of event and renting entity (e.g., non-profit organization, community group, individual, corporation).
- For events held during OHCM off-hours and/or with a larger attendance/audience, an additional fee may be applied for required GOHS staffing.
- A refundable security deposit equal to half of the total amount of the rental agreement fee may be required for larger events, to be held for damages or the cost of additional staff/overtime needed above that agreed upon in the contract.
- Accepted payments includes cash, check, or credit card.

7. Reservations & Booking

- Contact events@oneontahistory.org or directormm@oneontahistory.org or call 607-432-0960 for additional information and booking inquiries.
- An application form must be completed and submitted with the required deposit within the timeframe specified.
- Minimum lead time for booking is 30 days in advance of event; requests made under 30 days will be considered based on availability.
- A deposit of 50% of the total rental fee is required to secure the date. The remaining balance (and refundable security deposit, if applicable) will be due seven (7) days before the event.
- Cancellation Policy:
 - Full refund of deposit if canceled 14 or more days prior to event.
 - Partial refund of 50% of deposit if canceled within 7-13 days of event.
 - Deposit forfeited within 7 days of event.

¹ See <https://sla.ny.gov/system/files/documents/2018/06/special-event-permit-terms-and-conditions.pdf> and <https://sla.ny.gov/permits-available-online>

THIRD FLOOR BALLROOM – VENUE RENTAL RATES

Humanities/Cultural Programming and Meetings/Conferences

Lectures, book talks, speaker series, and other humanities/cultural programming

- No charge for GOHS sponsored or co-sponsored events

Group meetings or conferences (non-catered)

- Non-profit groups: \$ 0 (or by donation, accepted at any time)
- Individuals and/or for-profit organizations or groups:
 - Held during History Center/Museum business hours (9-5 M-F, 10-4 Sat)
\$50 for up to 3 hours + \$50/hour for each additional hour over 3 hours
 - Held during History Center/Museum off-hours (non-business hours)
\$100 for up to 3 hours + \$100/hour for each additional hour over 3 hours

Other Functions (receptions, parties, luncheons, dinners, etc.)

- Hourly rate of \$50 for non-profit organizations
- Hourly rate of \$100 for individuals and/or for-profit organizations