

Boston Public Library, Copley Square

Private Events Frequently Asked Questions

How do I book my event?

Please contact the Special Events Office (617.859.2212) to begin planning your special event. You will receive a full proposal outlining all charges (site fees, food and beverage, staffing, rentals, etc.) based on the details you provide. Please note the BPL does not honor a date 'hold' system. All dates are considered open until a signed contract and deposit have been received.

What times are available for private events?

The Guastavino Room, Map Room Café, and Courtyard Restaurant are available for private rental during library hours, along with various conference rooms. All other locations are available after the library has closed. For events held on a weekend, doors open to guests at 6:30p or later. Please contact the Special Events Office to determine available dates and start times for your event.

May I hold my wedding ceremony at the library?

Ceremonies in conjunction with a reception also hosted at the Boston Public Library are permitted. Please contact the Special Events Office for more details.

Is the Courtyard available for private functions?

The Courtyard is an ideal location for cocktail receptions and wedding ceremonies. It must be rented in conjunction with another space and is only available after the library has closed to the public.

Will other events be taking place at the same time?

The library will determine the number of events to be operated simultaneously in the building, and we do not guarantee you sole use of the building except in the location(s) as contracted. We will ensure that your event is in no way disrupted by another event. On a weekend evening, you may rent the entire building to ensure your sole use at the time of your event.

Are you able to hold your wedding rehearsal at the library the day before your ceremony?

Absolutely. Rehearsals occur during library hours and will be scheduled the day before your wedding and coordinated by a member of The Catered Affair.

If I am hosting my wedding at an alternate location may I take photos at the library?

We do not give permission to individuals looking to conduct formal photography during library hours, and enforce a set of guidelines to ensure the safety of the library as well as our patrons. Please view the photography guidelines here: <http://www.bpl.org/general/policies/photography.htm>

If you would like to schedule a private photo shoot, prior approval must be obtained. Please contact the Special Events Office to determine the available dates, start time, and fee for your session.

What are the venue fees for an event?

Venue fees may be found in the Private Event Pricing document. Venue fees include use of the space and library staffing needed to operate the building for your event (security, custodial, electrician and HVAC support). Your custom proposal will provide the exact cost based on the specifics of your event.

Am I required to use particular vendors?

The Catered Affair is our in-house caterer and is available to assist you not only in planning the ideal menu, but creating your perfect event. We will provide you with recommendations for other vendors (florists, bands, etc.) who have done superior work for our past clients.

Does the Library have parking available?

The library does not have designated parking; however there are a number of parking garages in close proximity to the building. Please contact the Special Events Office for details.

Can we arrange to have the tables in Bates Hall removed?

The tables and lamps in Bates Hall are stationary. The Events Staff is happy to offer suggestions on how each of the tables can be utilized for your specific event.

Can we have additional seating in Bates Hall?

Bates Hall currently offers seating for up to 220 guests. For an additional fee, the original chairs can be removed to accommodate up to 330 guests with rental chairs.

What type of décor am I permitted to use for my event?

Please contact the Special Events Office for specific questions regarding your décor. Open flame of any kind (including birthday candles, and candles during wedding ceremonies), balloons, greens that contain pitch, fog and bubble machines are not permitted in the library or Courtyard. All items must be free standing and not affixed to the building in any way.

Are there smoking areas in the building?

There is no smoking whatsoever in any interior area of the library, including the outdoor Courtyard and Abbey Terrace. Without exception, anyone caught smoking will be asked to leave the premises. Smoking is permitted outside of the building (at least 20 feet from library entrance).

Is security available for my event?

Basic security for the building is included in all venue fees. Any additional security, whether required by the library or the client, is at the expense of the client. Written permission from the library must be obtained prior to contracting additional security services for an event and contact between the contracted security vendor and library security supervisor will be required. Contact the Special Events Office for additional information.

Are fundraisers allowed at the Library?

Fundraising events are allowed at the library if the following conditions are met:

- Boston Public Library must approve the fundraiser event
- Must be coordinated and paid for by a non-profit organization
- Tickets may not be sold at the door
- Gambling activities are not permitted

Please feel free to contact the Special Events Office with any other questions.

Phone: 617.859.2212

Email: events@bpl.org