

**STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF NORTH DAKOTA
USER'S GUIDE FOR THE
FORMER GOVERNORS' MANSION STATE HISTORIC SITE
Revised May 2002**

The following guidelines have been adopted to protect the historic site and to clarify each party's responsibilities. By signing the Former Governors' Mansion Facility Agreement, you have agreed that you and your group will adhere to these guidelines. Facility use is governed by the North Dakota State Historical Board Policy.

The Former Governors' Mansion State Historic Site honors those who guided North Dakota and provides interpretation about historic preservation. Built in 1884 by businessman Asa Fisher, this late Victorian style house served as a home to North Dakota governors from 1893 to 1960. The dwelling has been listed on the National Register of Historic Places since 1975, not only because of its significant inhabitants and the historic events that occurred there, but also because of its architectural features.

The following guidelines have been adopted to protect the historic site and to clarify each party's responsibilities. By signing the *Former Governors' Mansion State Historic Site Facility Agreement*, you have agreed that you and your group will adhere to these guidelines. Facility use is governed by North Dakota State Historic Board policy.

A special event is defined as a program or activity that is beyond the normal daily scope of historic site operations and for which special provisions must be made.

It should be understood that special events are secondary to the principal purpose of the site, which is to preserve and interpret the history and maintain integrity of the mansion. Any request may be denied, if, in the judgement of the State Historical Society of North Dakota, such an event would compromise the site and its resources or threaten the preservation standards of the site.

FUNCTION SIZE AND TYPE

Users may host either a public lecture not to exceed 30 persons or a stand-up reception not to exceed 50 persons in order to insure adherence to fire and safety codes. The Former Governors' Mansion has occupancy loads established by the Bismarck Fire and Inspections Department. For large outdoor functions of more than 50 people the lawn may be used weather permitting. Keep in mind that in case of bad weather the house can only accommodate a maximum of 50 people.

USER QUALIFICATIONS

Non-agency use of the Former Governors' Mansion State Historic Site will be granted according to the following priorities at the discretion of the Historic Preservation Division Director and/or the Director of the State Historical Society of North Dakota:

- State Historical Society co-sponsors
- Official state and federal agencies
- Non-profit groups who goals and purposes are consistent with those of the SHSND
- Businesses
- Individuals

Events at the Former Governors' Mansion State Historic Site are normally free and open to the public. There may be no fees charged for general admittance nor free-will offerings solicited except under unusual circumstances approved in advance.

USER'S FEE

A \$250.00 per day (six-hour maximum) fee for the use of the Former Governors' Mansion State Historic Site will be charged to all groups and sponsoring individuals. Charges will be detailed on the *Former Governors' Mansion State Historic Site Facility Agreement*.

HOURS OF USE

The Former Governors' Mansion State Historic Site is open to the general public for viewing Wednesday through Sunday, 1:00 to 5:00 p.m., May 16 through September 15, or by appointment. Special event use may be scheduled during the open season when not in conflict with public hours.

EVENT SETUP and DECOR

The SHSND staff will help to arrange tables, chairs, and Society-owned equipment according to the user's instructions. The user must coordinate setup with SHSND staff prior to the function. Setup of any rental equipment is the responsibility of the facility user in coordination with SHSND staff. **No furniture or other items with in the house are to be moved by caterers, event organizers, users, or guests. All exhibit cases and display panels are to remain in place and will be moved only by State Historical Society staff.** Due to concern for the exhibits and to structural constraints, certain types of decor are prohibited or limited to very specific areas. **Decorations that are not allowed under any circumstance include helium filled balloons, banners, candles, incense, cut flowers or live plants. The use of tape, tacks, staples, and nails is prohibited.** Exhibits and fire exits must remain accessible at all times. Facility users should review all decor plans with SHSND staff prior to the event. Arrangements for delivery of equipment and setup will be made by the user and approved by SHSND staff. Any costs incurred for equipment, communication hookups, etc., will be paid by the user.

RESERVATION PROCEDURES

Reservations may be scheduled through the Historic Preservation Division of the State Historical Society of North Dakota. Groups will initiate the scheduling process by calling the Historic Preservation Division at (701) 328-3015.

Reservations are accepted on a first-come, first-served basis, with priority given to the State Historical Society of North Dakota. **Generally, reservations are not confirmed more than 90 days or less than ten days in advance.**

No reservation will be confirmed until a *Former Governors' Mansion State Historic Site Facility Agreement* form is completed and signed by the user, the Historic Preservation Division Director, the Director of the State Historical Society, and the rental fee has been paid in full.

Supplemental agreements may be required if special requests are approved. All requests for changes are to be made no less than one week in advance of the date of the event and must be made through the office of the Historic Preservation Division.

FURNITURE USE and SPECIAL ROOM USE

The Former Governors' mansion and the items on display in it are all considered part of the museums collections therefore only chairs and tables designated for use or brought in specifically for an event may be used.

If changing space is needed such as in the case of a wedding, arrangements should be made ahead of time for the use of one of the upstairs bedrooms. Chairs and a clothing rack will be provided. Nothing is to be hung or laid on any of the furniture or historic items in the room. No one is to sit on, lay on or otherwise use any of the furniture.

SMOKING AND FLAME

The Former Governors' Mansion State Historic Site is a smoke-free building and operates under a **NO-FLAME** policy, which prohibits the use of candles, lanterns, oil or gas lamps, lighters, or incense.

REFRESHMENTS

All refreshments must be served from the kitchen or on the lawn and when possible all food should be consumed in the kitchen area or the back porch. Food is allowed in the down stairs portion of the house with special permission given on a case by case basis. Under no circumstances is food or drink of any kind allowed upstairs.

CATERERS

A licensed caterer **must** be used. All catering arrangements and supplies, including table linens and table decor, are the responsibility of the user. **The user must provide SHSND staff the name of the caterer and their expected time of arrival.**

Caterers are responsible for setup and removal of any equipment, including tables and chairs, that are in their possession. Caterers are responsible for cleanup of serving areas, garbage removal, and for any spills. Please report all spills to SHSND staff. If any conflict arises between the caterer and SHSND personnel, the user will be immediately notified and asked to resolve the issue with the caterer. All catering arrangements and supplies, including table linens and table decor, are the responsibility of the user. The user must provide the Director of the Historic Preservation Division the name of the caterer, and his/her expected time of arrival.

Water is available in the kitchen and one small bathroom. No washing of dishes is allowed in any sink. The site does have sufficient electrical power to handle electric warmers, a large coffeepot and other catering equipment.

Caterers will be provided with guidelines specific to their needs and will be required to sign a form indicating their willingness to comply with those guidelines whenever catering at the Former Governors' Mansion State Historic Site.

ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES

Alcoholic beverages in the form of wine, wine coolers, and beer only may be served and consumed when the user has obtained written permission from the Director of the State Historical Society of North Dakota. Requests will be considered on a case-by-case basis. The user and/or caterer will enter into an agreement approved by the Office of Attorney General which holds the State Historical Society of North Dakota (State Historical Board) harmless from all liability incurred as a result of the serving and consumption of alcoholic beverages.

TELEPHONES: MESSAGES

There is one phone in the Former Governors' Mansion State Historic Site, it is located on the north side of the kitchen inside the cupboard. The Former Governors' Mansion phone number is 328-9529. The security office at the North Dakota Heritage Center responds to emergencies and alarms at the Former Governors' Mansion State Historic Site. The telephone number to use for such occasions is 8-3564. For a public telephone line to make an outside call, dial 9 prior to the number.

LIABILITY

The State Historical Society of North Dakota assumes no responsibility for personal injury, property loss or damage occurring during meetings or events sponsored by outside groups. Damage to State Historical Society property will result in billing the user for replacement or repair.

The user shall save and hold harmless the State of North Dakota and the State Historical Society of North Dakota, its officers, agents, employees, and members, from all claims, suits, or actions of whatsoever nature resulting from or arising out of the activities of the user or its subcontractors, agents or employees. The user also agrees to abide by all laws of the State of North Dakota.

* This site has limited accessibility.