



# VENUE DECORATING & PROP/SET GUIDELINES

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## Decorations Policy Overview

We know that decorations can help make your event special and memorable. To keep our venues safe and in good condition, we ask that all decorations follow a few important guidelines.

### What counts as a decoration?

Decorations include anything used to enhance or personalize a space—like posters, pictures, paper items, lighting, and more. Place Markers—like tape put on the floor to indicate where something will be placed, pertain to this policy.

### Before your event

All decorations must be approved by Event Services. If you're unsure whether something is allowed, it's your responsibility to check with us ahead of time.

### Why this matters

Some decorations can damage our facilities or equipment. To avoid extra charges or delays, please review the full guidelines and ask questions early.

## General Guidelines

To protect our venues and ensure a smooth experience for everyone, please follow these general rules when decorating:

- **Avoid Damage:** Decorations must not damage any part of the venue—including floors, walls, doors, windows, or equipment.
- **No Attachments:** Do not tape, glue, staple, or attach anything to surfaces. This includes using tape as a placeholder or marker on floors or walls. Nothing can be attached to our facilities or equipment..
- **Clean-Up Required:** All decorations must be removed by the end of your reservation. If the space isn't returned to its original condition, cleaning fees may apply.
- **Sprinkler Clearance:** Keep all decorations, props, and inflatables at least 18 inches away from sprinkler heads on all sides.
- **Anchor Free-Standing Items:** Free-standing decorations must be anchored with weights/sandbags
- **Barricades:** If your event includes barricades (typically for concerts), Production Services will provide floor protection for the Barricade.
- **Ceiling Restrictions:** Do not decorate, alter, or hang anything from ceiling tiles or grids.
- **Keep Pathways Clear:** Decorations must not block doorways, hallways, or stairways.



- **No Spraying Indoors:** Sprays like balloon finishing spray or paint must be applied and fully dried before items are brought into the venue.

### Permitted & Prohibited Decorations

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Permitted Decorations	Prohibited Decorations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Free-Standing Decorations such as:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Table Top Centerpieces</li> <li>○ Cardboard Cutouts</li> <li>○ Backdrops &amp; Backdrop Stands</li> <li>○ Sign Holders &amp; Easels</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Pre-made prop/set pieces (Including Photo Booths)</li> <li>● Electric Candles in containers (Open-flame candles in containers are allowed in the Chapel Only, with permit)</li> <li>● Balloon &amp; Balloon Arches (w/out confetti)</li> <li>● Flowers &amp; Vases</li> <li>● Picture Frames &amp; Mirrors</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Glitter/Confetti               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Including confetti filled balloons</li> </ul> </li> <li>● Tape (All kinds)</li> <li>● Wall Glue, Putty, or Adhesives</li> <li>● Nails/Staples used to attach items to surfaces</li> <li>● Bubbles or Bubble Machines</li> <li>● Candle Wax</li> <li>● Sand, Gravel, Fountains/"water features", or ice sculptures</li> <li>● Plastic or Straw Hay Bales</li> <li>● Window Coverings</li> <li>● Paper Streamers</li> </ul>

Venue-Specifics for what types of decorations are generally allowed and how they can be used in our various types of venues are listed below:

- **Auditoriums/Lecture Halls/Theaters**
  - **Floor Markers/Tape** - Production Services can provide specific tape for this purpose
  - **Props & Sets** - Theatrical prop and sets are allowed per the guidelines below
  - **Special Effects** - Lighting & Fog Machines
  - **Permitted Decorations** - Anything listed as a permitted item above
- **Ballroom/Multipurpose Rooms**
  - **Permitted Decorations** - Anything listed as a permitted item above
  - **Props & Sets** - Theatrical prop and sets are allowed per the guidelines below
  - **Special Effects** - Lighting, Air Cannons, & Fog Machines
  - **Electric Candles ONLY** - Open-Flame candles are not permitted
  - **NO TAPE/FLOOR MARKERS OF ANY KIND**
- **Meeting Rooms**
  - **Table Top/Free-Standing Decorations** - Free-Standing items must have an 18' diameter clearance from sprinkler heads
  - **Electric Candles ONLY** - Open-Flame candles are not permitted
  - **NO CEILING DECORATIONS**



- **Non-Denominational Chapel**

- **Permitted Decorations** - Anything listed as a permitted item above
- **Props & Sets** - Theatrical prop and sets are allowed per the guidelines below
- **Open-Flame Candles** - Candles must be contained and an Open-Burn Permit is required.

## Special Effects & Pyrotechnics

Special Effects (SFX) refers to any effect that is flame or heat based and produces either a flame, spark, explosion, or smoke. All **Special Effects (SFX)** used for events must be discussed and approved with the Production Services Office prior to the event. Examples of special effect decorations and devices may include:

- Fog Machines
- Strobe Lights
- GOBO Lights
- Air Cannons

[Special Effect & Pyrotechnics Guidelines](#) are provided by the Production Services office with more information on how you can apply to have special effects at your event and their restrictions.

## Suspended Decoration & Scenery Guidelines

Production Services provides [Suspended Decoration & Scenery Guidelines](#) that share clear details on their processes for hanging decoration items from theatrical fly systems within our Haymarket Theatre and Burruss Hall Auditorium venues.

Theatrical fly systems consist of horizontal pipes, otherwise known as battens, to hold items via clamps or tie-line string. Permitted items that are allowed to be suspended are:

- Banners
- Posters
- Flags
- Backdrops
- Other items upon approval

## Theatrical Prop & Set Assembly Guidelines

### Construction Restrictions

- **Set and prop construction is strictly prohibited** inside any SECL-managed facility.
  - This includes, but is not limited to:
    - Painting (spray, oil-based, latex, etc.)



- Sawing, sanding, or cutting
- Applying putty, glue, or adhesives
- All construction work must be completed **off-site** prior to arrival.

### Assembly Guidelines

- Only **pre-constructed pieces** may be brought into the venue and assembled using **screws or bolts**.
- **No fasteners** (screws, bolts, etc.) may be placed on the bottom of any item or in contact with floors or walls.
- **No drilling or cutting** is permitted inside the venue. All holes and cuts must be made in advance.

### Transportation & Setup

- All items must be **carried or rolled** in using carts, dollies, or similar equipment.  
**Dragging items across any surface is not allowed.**
- Assembly must be scheduled as part of your reservation.
- All assembly must take place on **canvas tarps or ram board**, provided by the event sponsor.

### Doorway Dimensions

Ensure all pieces can fit through the following doorways:

- **Single door:** 36" wide × 80" high
- **Double door:** 72" wide × 80" high

### Venue Protection & Accountability

- **Approved Decorations** will be listed within the client's reservation summary.
- Any decorations/materials being used that are **not approved or violate policy** will be removed/taken down at the time of the occurrence.
- **Any damages** identified will be charged to the event sponsor.