

HUSTON-TILLOTSON UNIVERSITY

Office of Special Events Events Policy and Procedures Manual

*A Comprehensive Guide for Event Planning, Venue Reservations,
and Campus Event Management*

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Huston-Tillotson University
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Section 1 — Introduction & Purpose

1.1 About the Office of Special Events / Rooms & Reservations

The Office of Special Events at Huston-Tillotson University serves as the central coordinating body for all campus event activity. We are responsible for the intake, scheduling, approval, and operational oversight of events held on Huston-Tillotson University grounds — from intimate departmental meetings to large-scale convocations, external conferences, and community engagement activities.

Our office is the single point of contact for any group — internal department, student organization, or external client — seeking to host a gathering on campus. We work in close partnership with Campus Safety, Facilities Management, Student Affairs, Academic Affairs, and Enrollment Management to ensure that every event reflects the excellence and legacy of Huston-Tillotson University.

1.2 Scope of Services

The Office of Special Events manages the following:

- Venue reservations and calendar management for all schedulable campus spaces
- Event review, approval, and coordination support
- Vendor management and third-party service oversight during campus events
- Security coordination with Campus Safety for qualifying events
- Policy enforcement and compliance monitoring before, during, and after events

The following fall outside our direct scope but will be coordinated through referral:

- Classroom scheduling for academic instruction (managed by Academic Affairs)
- Library facility reservations (managed by Downs-Jones Library)
- University-sponsored travel and off-campus events (managed by the originating department)

1.3 Definition of an Event

For the purposes of this policy manual, an "event" is defined as any organized gathering of ten (10) or more individuals that requires the use of a designated campus space, involves the setup or modification of that space, and/or requires support services such as catering, AV equipment, security, or parking.

Events are classified into the following host types:

- **Internal Departmental Event:** Hosted by a university academic or administrative department using university funds.
- **Student Organization Event:** Hosted by a recognized student organization, co-curricular program, or campus club.
- **External Event:** Hosted by a non-university individual, organization, corporation, or community group using campus facilities under a rental agreement.
- **Co-Sponsored Event:** A collaborative event between an internal university entity and an external organization, subject to review on a case-by-case basis.

1.4 Mission Statement

The Office of Special Events at Huston-Tillotson University is committed to creating seamless, memorable, and mission-aligned experiences for every group we serve. We uphold the highest standards of professionalism, equity, and excellence — honoring the university's proud legacy while serving our students, faculty, staff, and community with integrity and purpose.

Section 2 — Governance & Authority

2.1 Final Approval Authority

The Special Events coordinator holds final approval authority over all event requests submitted to the Office of Special Events. All approvals and denials flow from this office. No campus space may be confirmed for event use without final approval issued by the Office of Special Events.

In the absence of the coordinator, the designated Office of Special Events staff or Vice President for Marketing, Strategy, Impact, and Innovation assumes approval authority. The Vice President for Marketing, Strategy, Impact, and Innovation may override the Office of Special Events decisions in extraordinary circumstances.

2.2 Approval Hierarchy

Level	Authority
1 — Department / Student Org	Submits event request; no self-approval authority
2 — Campus Life / Student Affairs	Reviews and endorses student organization events before Office of Special Events review
3 — Office of Special Events	Issues final approval or denial
4 — VP for Marketing, Strategy, Impact, and Innovation	Final escalation authority for special circumstances or appeals

2.3 Right to Deny, Cancel, or Modify

The Office of Special Events reserves the right to:

- Deny any event request that does not meet submission, policy, or safety requirements.
- Cancel a previously approved event if material information changes, conditions cannot be met, or the event poses a risk to university property or the safety of participants.
- Modify the scope, timing, location, or conditions of an approved event to ensure compliance and operational feasibility.

Event requesters will be notified in writing of any denial, cancellation, or modification and will be given an explanation and, where applicable, an opportunity to resubmit.

2.4 Enforcement Authority During Events

Office of Special Events staff, Vice President for Marketing, Strategy, Impact, and Innovation, and Office of the President have full authority to enforce this policy manual during any event on campus. This includes the authority to:

- Halt or suspend an event in progress that is in violation of this policy.
- Remove individuals who are disruptive, pose a safety risk, or fail to comply with staff directives.
- Require vendors or contractors to cease operations if they are not in compliance.
- Contact Austin Police Department or other emergency services as warranted.

2.5 Consequences for Non-Compliance

Organizations or individuals who fail to comply with this manual are subject to the following consequences, depending on the nature and severity of the violation:

- Written warning and notation in event file
- Financial liability for damages or additional costs incurred
- Suspension of reservation privileges for one or more semesters
- Permanent revocation of reservation privileges

- Escalation to the Dean of Students, Office of the Provost, or Judicial Committee, as appropriate

Section 3 — Event Classification System

3.1 Tier Overview

All events hosted at Huston-Tillotson University are classified into tiers based on anticipated attendance, the nature of activities, the hosting entity, and any associated risk factors.

Tier	Classification	Attendance
Tier 1	Small Event	1 – 50 guests
Tier 2	Mid-Level Event	51 – 199 guests
Tier 3	Large-Scale Event	200+ guests

3.2 Tier Descriptions

Tier 1 — Small Events (1–50 Guests)

Tier 1 events are low-complexity gatherings such as team meetings, small workshops, study sessions, departmental luncheons, and student organization chapter meetings. These events typically require minimal setup and do not involve outside vendors or public promotion. These events require a dedicated on-site coordinator.

Tier 2 — Mid-Level Events (51–199 Guests)

Tier 2 events include seminars, receptions, career fairs, panel discussions, and student-hosted programs of moderate scale. These events require a dedicated on-site coordinator and an event timeline.

Tier 3 — Large-Scale Events (200+ Guests)

Tier 3 events include convocations, commencement-adjacent activities, large conferences, concerts, banquets, and events with significant public attendance. These events require a comprehensive event plan, a walkthrough of the space, confirmed vendor agreements, and mandatory security coordination with Campus Safety.

3.3 Event Type Classifications

- **Internal Events:** Hosted by HT University departments. Generally exempt from rental fees but subject to all operational policies.
- **Student Organization Events:** Hosted by recognized student organizations. Must include co-sign from Campus Life and **an on-campus or off campus advisor must be present**. Subject to specific student conduct expectations.
- **External Events:** Hosted by non-university clients. Subject to all rental fees, insurance requirements, and the external client agreement.
- **Co-Sponsored Events:** Jointly hosted events. The internal co-sponsor assumes shared responsibility for compliance. External pricing may be reduced at university's discretion.

Section 4 — Event Request Process

4.1 Required Submission Method

All event requests must be submitted through the official Venue Request Form, available on the htu.edu website. The form is the only accepted method of initiating an event reservation. Verbal requests, emails, or informal communications do not constitute a reservation and will not be honored. For external and community partners event requests must be submitted through the official venue request form in Honeybooks.

NOTE: *Completing and submitting the Venue Request Form does not guarantee approval or hold any space. A space is only confirmed upon confirmation approval from the Office of Special Events.*

4.2 Submission Timeline Requirements

To ensure adequate time for review, coordination, and approval, all event requests must be submitted in accordance with the following timeline requirements:

- Internal Events — Requests must be submitted a minimum of 21 business days (three weeks) prior to the intended event date.
- External Events — Requests involving outside guests, external organizations, or the general public must be submitted a minimum of 21 business days (three weeks) prior to the intended event date.

Submissions that do not meet the required timeline are subject to automatic deferral or denial. The Office of Special Events cannot guarantee review, resource allocation, or approval for requests submitted outside of these windows.

NOTE: *Business days are defined as Monday through Friday, excluding university holidays and administrative closures. Submission deadlines are calculated from the date the completed form is received, not the date it is initiated.*

4.3 Required Information

All Venue Request Forms must include the following complete and accurate information:

- Event name and description (purpose, activities, agenda summary)
- Hosting organization or department, with authorized contact name and contact information
- Requested event date(s)
- Requested setup time and breakdown/teardown time
- Estimated attendance (provide realistic estimate; underreporting is a policy violation)
- Preferred venue(s) and any space-specific requirements
- Advisor or Person of Contact
- Acknowledgment and signature of the authorized event coordinator

4.4 Duplicate Booking Policy

Back-to-back reservations of the same space are subject to scheduling availability and Office of Special Events discretion. Intentional "placeholder" bookings without the intent to use the space are prohibited and will result in suspension of reservation privileges.

Section 5 — Approval Workflow

5.1 Step-by-Step Approval Process

1. Requester submits a completed Venue Request Form through the Office of Special Events (Office of Special Events) portal.
2. The request is routed for initial approval:
 - a. To the Dean of Student Affairs for Student Organization events
 - b. To Athletics for events requesting use of the Mary E. Branch gymnasium
 - c. To the Library for events requesting use of the Downs-Jones Library
 - d. To the Office of Special Events for final approval of all events which includes academic & student programming.
3. If the request is not approved at the initial stage, the process ends and the requester is notified.
4. If approved, the request is forwarded to the Office of Special Events for final review.
5. The Office of Special Events conducts a Master Calendar check located on the htu.edu website to confirm space availability and identify any conflicts or blackout date issues.
6. Office of Special Events issues a final decision:
 - a. Approval
 - b. Denial
7. If approved, the requester is notified and the event is officially added to the University Events Calendar.
8. The Office of Special Events sends a confirmation calendar invitation to the requester with finalized event details.

5.2 Event Denial

Event requests may be denied for the following reasons:

- Space unavailability on requested dates
- Submission below minimum lead time
- Incomplete or inaccurate submission information
- Event activity that conflicts with university mission, values, or policies
- Safety or security concerns that cannot be adequately mitigated
- Outstanding fees, violations, or compliance issues with the requesting organization

5.3 Auto-Cancellation Conditions

An approved event reservation will be automatically cancelled under the following circumstances:

- The requester fails to acknowledge the Confirmation invite within 48 hours of issuance.
- Required fees or deposits are not received by the payment deadline.

The Office of Special Events will notify the requester by email upon auto-cancellation. Re-booking after a cancellation is subject to availability.

Section 6 — Event Planning Requirements

6.1 Designated On-Site Event Coordinator

All events must designate a specific individual as the on-site event coordinator or advisor [can be on-campus or off campus]. This person must be present for the full duration of the event, from setup through breakdown. The on-site coordinator is responsible for:

- Serving as the primary point of contact for Office of Special Events staff and campus partners
- Ensuring all vendors and contractors follow university policy
- Managing the event timeline and communicating changes in real time
- Responding to any issues, emergencies, or policy concerns that arise

If that individual cannot be physically present for the entire event. The Office of Special Events must be notified of any changes to the on-site coordinator at least 24 hours before the event.

6.2 Site Walkthrough Requirements

All external events must schedule a site walkthrough with the Office of Special Events at least seven (7) days before the event date. During the walkthrough, the requester will:

- Confirm room layout and setup configuration
- Review load-in access routes and parking for vendors
- Identify AV equipment locations and technology setup
- Review emergency exits and safety procedures for the specific space

Section 7 — Venue Usage Policies

7.1 Space Usage Limitations

All campus spaces must be used in accordance with their intended purpose and design. Modifications to the permanent infrastructure of any space including moving furniture, altering electrical configurations, removing equipment, or affixing anything to walls, ceilings, or floors are strictly prohibited.

7.2 Capacity Limits

All campus spaces have posted fire code capacity limits established in compliance with the City of Austin Fire Code and the State of Texas building safety regulations. These limits are absolute maximums and must not be exceeded under any circumstances. Events approaching maximum capacity must coordinate with Campus Safety to manage ingress, egress, and crowd flow.

NOTE: *The event host is responsible for enforcing capacity compliance during the event.*

7.3 Approved Use of Academic Buildings

Academic buildings, including classrooms and lecture halls may be reserved for non-instructional events only when not in academic use. Events in academic buildings must receive Office of Special Events approval. No food or beverages are permitted in laboratory spaces. All academic spaces must be returned to their standard configuration at the conclusion of any event.

7.4 Restricted Areas

The following areas are not available for general event reservations:

- President's Dining Room
- Information Technology Server Rooms
- Construction zones and areas under renovation
- Any area designated as restricted by Campus Safety

7.5 Access Control

Reserved spaces will be unlocked by campus safety at the confirmed setup time. Requesters must not attempt to access a space before the confirmed time. After-hours access requires prior written authorization and may incur additional fees.

Section 8 — Scheduling & Calendar Management

8.1 Master Calendar Authority

The Office of Special Events maintains the official Huston-Tillotson University Event Calendar. All approved campus events are entered into the Master Calendar upon confirmation. The Master Calendar is the authoritative source for scheduling and conflict resolution. No entity may claim exclusive use of a space or time without a confirmed reservation reflected in the Master Calendar.

8.2 Blackout Dates

The following periods are designated as blackout dates, during which no external events will be approved and internal events are subject to significant restrictions. Internal requests during blackout periods require Office of Special Events Approval:

-
- Fall Semester Onboarding
- Final Examination Periods (Fall and Spring)
- Homecoming
- Commencement Week (including all pre-commencement ceremonies)
- Charter Week
- Registration Week (beginning of each semester)
- Winter Break (December 20 – January 3)
- HBCU Aicon
- Spring Break (per academic calendar)
- Ramfest
- Commencement
- Institutional Planning Days and All-Faculty/Staff Days

A complete and current list of blackout dates for each academic year is published on the university's website and updated annually.

8.3 Priority Scheduling

In the event of scheduling conflicts, the following priority order governs space assignments:

- Institutional/Administrative University Events (e.g., Board of Trustees meetings, accreditation activities)
- University-Sponsored Programs (Convocation, Homecoming, etc.)
- Academic Instruction and University Examinations
- Internal Departmental Events
- Student Organization Events
- External Rental Events

8.4 Conflict Resolution

When two or more requests for the same space on the same date and time are received simultaneously, Office of Special Events will resolve the conflict using the priority order in Section 8.3. If both parties are of equal priority, the request submitted earliest (by date and time stamp) will be given preference. Office of Special Events will notify the lower-priority requester of the conflict and offer alternative spaces or times where available.

Section 9 — Setup, Facilities & Logistics

9.1 Facilities Request Process

All requests for Facilities Management support — including tables and chair setup, or cleaning — must be submitted via a separate Facilities Request Form in addition to the Venue Request Form. The Facilities Request Form must be submitted at least 2 weeks in advance (14 business days) before the event for standard requests. Submission of the Venue Request Form alone does not initiate a Facilities work order.

9.2 Setup Diagrams

Bigger events must submit a setup diagram indicating the intended furniture arrangement, staging, registration tables, and any other physical configurations. Diagrams must be submitted with the Facilities Request Form.

9.3 Tables, Chairs & Furnishings Policy

Standard tables and chairs are available for events at no additional charge for faculty, staff and student events, subject to inventory availability. External and community partners are subject to additional fees for tables and chairs.

This includes:

- 6-foot and 8-foot rectangular folding tables
- Round banquet tables (60-inch diameter, seats 8)
- Round banquet tables (72-inch diameter, seats 8)
- Standard folding chairs and padded banquet chairs (limited inventory)
- Podiums (one per event, subject to availability)

Items not in the standard inventory — linens, specialty furniture, staging, risers, pipe-and-drape — are the responsibility of the requester to source through an approved vendor. University furniture must not be removed from designated spaces.

9.4 Setup and Breakdown Time Policy

Setup time and breakdown time must be requested as part of the original reservation and are reflected in the confirmed event window. Time outside the confirmed event window is not guaranteed and may not be used without written authorization. Setup time is counted as part of the room reservation for scheduling purposes. Requesters must ensure all setup activities are completed before the official event start time.

Section 10 — Vendors & Third-Party Services

10.1 Vendor Policy

Huston-Tillotson University does not maintain an exclusive approved vendor list; however, all vendors operating on campus must comply with the requirements of this section. The Office of Special Events reserves the right to prohibit vendors who have previously violated university policy or whose services are inconsistent with university values.

10.2 Required Vendor Documentation

Before providing any services on campus, all external vendors must submit the following to Office of Special Events:

- Completed Vendor Agreement Form (provided by Office of Special Events)
- Certificate of General Liability Insurance (\$1,000,000 per occurrence minimum)
- Business license or proof of professional registration (if applicable)
- Contact information for the vendor representative who will be on site

Documentation must be received at least five (7) business days before the event. Vendors who arrive on campus without completed documentation will be denied access.

10.3 Vendor Check-In Procedures

All vendors must check in at the Campus Safety checkpoint upon arrival. Vendors will receive a temporary campus vendor pass. Vendors may not access the event space before the confirmed load-in time. All vendor vehicles must adhere to campus parking and traffic rules and may not block emergency access lanes.

10.4 Vendor Conduct Expectations

While on campus, all vendors and their staff are expected to:

- Treat university staff, students, and guests with professionalism and respect
- Follow all instructions from the Office of Special Events staff and Campus Safety
- Confine activity to the designated event and load-in areas
- Refrain from soliciting or promoting services to non-event attendees
- Report any safety issues or incidents to campus safety immediately

Vendors who fail to comply with these expectations may be removed from campus and barred from future events.

10.5 Load-In / Load-Out Rules

Load-in and load-out must occur only during the confirmed access windows. All equipment, materials, and furnishings brought by vendors must be removed from campus at the conclusion of load-out. Items left on campus without prior written authorization may be removed and disposed of at the vendor's expense.

Section 11 — Catering & Food Services

11.1 Campus Catering Contact

Huston-Tillotson University has a designated campus catering partner for events requiring food service. All events involving food and/or beverage service are encouraged to first contact the campus catering office for pricing and availability. Contact information for the campus catering partner is listed in Appendix G (Contact Directory).

11.2 Outside Catering Policy

Outside catering (food brought from sources other than the campus catering partner) is permitted for campus events with the following conditions:

- The catering company must be a licensed food service provider with a valid City of Austin Food Handler's Permit.
- Outside caterers must comply with all vendor documentation requirements in Section 10.2.

11.3 Food Safety Expectations

All food service at campus events must comply with applicable Texas food safety regulations and City of Austin health ordinances. Perishable items must be maintained at appropriate temperatures throughout the event. Buffet-style service must include appropriate serving equipment, labels, and allergen awareness. The event host is responsible for ensuring that food service meets safety standards.

11.4 Cleanup Responsibilities

The event host is responsible for ensuring that all food and beverage items are cleared from the event space at the conclusion of the event. This includes disposable tableware, trash, and any remaining catered food. Leftover food may not be left in campus spaces. The Office of Special Events will assess a cleaning fee if the space is left in an unsatisfactory condition related to food service.

11.5 Payment Responsibility

Catering costs are the sole financial responsibility of the event host. Huston-Tillotson University does not pay for catering services on behalf of external clients or student organizations. Internal departmental events requiring catering expenditures must be processed through the university budget and procurement process. Disputes between an event host and a catering vendor are the responsibility of the event host to resolve.

Section 12 — Financial Policies & Fees

12.1 Fee Schedule

The following fee schedule is effective for all events during the current fiscal year. Fees are subject to annual review and adjustment. All fees will be confirmed in the event Confirmation Letter.

Fee Item	Internal / Student Org	External Client
Security (per hour)	No Charge	\$55
Cleaning / Reset Fee	No Charge	\$250
Agard-Lovinggood Auditorium	No Charge	\$800 (4 Hours) • \$1,200 (8 Hours)
Davage-Durden Student Union	No Charge	\$1,500 (4 Hours) • \$2,500 (8 Hours)
Dickey-Lawless Science Building Auditorium	No Charge	\$600 (4 Hours) • \$1,000 (8 Hours)
Evans Industrial Building Lecture Hall	No Charge	\$600 (4 Hours) • \$1,000 (8 Hours)
Grounds/Athletic Field	No Charge	\$2,500 Flat Rate
King-Seabrook Chapel	No Charge	\$1,500 (4 Hours) • \$2,500 (8 Hours)
Mary E. Branch Gymnasium	No Charge	\$1,500 (6–8 Hours Minimum)

12.2 Nonprofit Discounts

Qualified 501(c)(3) nonprofit organizations may receive a 15% discount on external venue rental rates. To qualify, the organization must provide a copy of its IRS Determination Letter at the time of request. The Office of Special Events may approve additional discounts at their discretion for community organizations with a documented partnership with HT University.

12.3 Payment Deadlines

Payments must be made via university-approved methods: electronic payment through the university's Honeybook portal. Cash payments are not accepted by Office of Special Events.

Events with outstanding balances past the payment deadline are subject to automatic cancellation. Office of Special Events will make one (1) written notification to the event contact before initiating cancellation proceedings.

12.4 Refund and Cancellation Policy

Cancellation Timing	Refund Amount
15 days before event	50% refund
8–14 days before event	No refund
7 days or fewer before event	No refund
University-initiated cancellation	100% refund

We are a net 30 university. Refunds will be processed within 30 business days of cancellation confirmation. Refunds are issued using the same method as the original payment, ACH, or by check.

Section 13 — Security & Risk Management

13.1 When Security Is Required

Security staffing through the Office of Campus Safety is required for:

- Any event open to the general public
- Any event expected to have 100 or more attendees
- All late-night events (events ending after 10:00 PM)
- Events involving cash transactions or financial exchanges with attendees
- Events involving the presence of elected officials, dignitaries, or prominent public figures

The minimum number of security personnel required will be determined by Campus Safety, based on event type, attendance, and risk assessment. The cost of security staffing is the responsibility of the event host.

13.2 Crowd Control Expectations

Event hosts are responsible for implementing appropriate crowd management measures, including clear signage, queuing systems, adequate staffing at entry points, and communication with security. Office of Special Events may require the submission of a crowd management plan for events over 200 attendees.

13.3 Emergency Procedures

All events with 100 or more attendees must have a designated emergency contact who is briefed on:

- The location of all emergency exits in the event space
- The location of AED devices and first aid kits
- Emergency contact numbers for Campus Safety (primary) and Austin 9-1-1 (emergency)
- Evacuation procedures specific to the event space

13.4 Incident Reporting

Any incident occurring during or immediately following a campus event — including injury, property damage, theft, altercation, or any situation requiring emergency response — must be reported to the Office of Special Events, Dean of Student Affairs, and Director of Campus Safety in writing within 24 hours of the event's conclusion. Failure to report incidents may result in suspension of reservation privileges.

Section 14 — Insurance Requirements

14.1 When Insurance Is Required

A Certificate of Insurance (COI) is required for all external events and for any event involving outside vendors, third-party contractors, or activities that pose an elevated liability risk (e.g., physical activities, equipment rentals, live performances). Insurance must be submitted to the Office of Special Events no later than ten (10) Business day before the event. Internal departmental events are generally covered under the university's general liability policy.

14.2 Certificate of Insurance Requirements

The COI submitted to Office of Special Events must meet the following minimum requirements:

- General Liability: \$1,000,000 per occurrence / \$2,000,000 aggregate
- Policy must be current and cover the full event date(s) and setup/breakdown period
- Huston-Tillotson University must be listed as an Additional Insured on the policy
- The certificate must be issued by a licensed insurance carrier
- COI must be received by Office of Special Events at least 10 business days before the event

14.3 Liability Coverage Expectations

The event host assumes full financial responsibility for any claims, damages, injuries, or losses arising from their event that exceed or fall outside the coverage of the submitted insurance policy.

Huston-Tillotson University shall not be held liable for incidents arising from the negligence of the event host, their vendors, contractors, or guests. The event host agrees to indemnify and hold harmless the university as a condition of event approval.

Section 15 — Conduct & Behavioral Expectations

15.1 Code of Conduct Enforcement

All individuals present at campus events — including event hosts, guests, vendors, volunteers, and performers — are expected to conduct themselves in accordance with the Huston-Tillotson University Code of Conduct and the standards outlined in this manual. The event host is responsible for communicating behavioral expectations to all participants and ensuring compliance throughout the event.

15.2 Prohibited Activities

The following activities are strictly prohibited at all HT University events:

- Alcohol (unless specifically authorized in writing by University Administration for approved venues.)
- Tobacco, smoking, vaping, or use of cannabis products anywhere on campus property. HT is a tobacco free campus.
- Weapons of any kind, including firearms, regardless of any applicable carry permits.
- Illegal substances or controlled substances not prescribed by a licensed physician.
- Gambling or games of chance for monetary gain.
- Unauthorized solicitation or commercial activity directed at guests.
- Harassment, intimidation, or threatening conduct of any kind.
- Unauthorized recording of private individuals without consent.
- Unauthorized sales of tickets, merchandise, or food on campus.

15.3 Disruptive Behavior Policy

Behavior that disrupts the safe and orderly conduct of an event including but not limited to verbal altercations, aggressive conduct, disorderly noise, or damage to property will not be tolerated. Office of Special Events staff and Campus Safety are authorized to ask any disruptive individual to leave the event and the premises.

15.4 Removal Procedures

If an individual must be removed from an event for a code of conduct violation:

- Campus Safety will be contacted immediately.
- The individual will be calmly and professionally directed to leave by a uniformed Campus Safety officer.
- If the individual refuses to leave, Campus Safety may involve the Austin Police Department.
- The event host will be notified, and an Incident Report will be filed.
- An incident report can be filed with any Campus Safety officer.
- The removed individual may be subject to further disciplinary action by the university.

Section 16 — Decor & Space Restrictions

16.1 General Restrictions

To protect the integrity of university facilities, the following are strictly prohibited in all campus event spaces:

- Tape of any kind on walls, windows, doors, columns, floors, or furniture (including painter's tape, gaffer's tape, and command strips)
- Nails, screws, pushpins, or any fasteners that penetrate walls or surfaces
- Glitter, confetti, or sequined loose-element decor of any kind
- Mylar or foil balloons inside buildings (latex balloons permitted)
- Fog machines, bubble machines, or smoke effects without prior written approval from Office of Special Events.
- Hanging installations from ceiling fixtures, sprinkler heads, or fire suppression equipment

16.2 Fire Safety Restrictions

Open flames of any kind are prohibited in all interior campus spaces. This includes:

- Candles
- Chafing dish fuel (Sterno) in spaces not designated for catered food service
- Sparklers, fireworks, or pyrotechnic effects

16.3 Approved Decor Practices

The following decor approaches are approved with no special authorization required:

- Freestanding signage and A-frame signs with weighted bases
- Tablecloths, centerpieces, and tabletop decor that does not penetrate surfaces
- Step-and-repeat banners with freestanding frames
- Pipe-and-drape systems installed by a licensed vendor
- Balloon bouquets with weighted bases (latex, non-helium, non-mylar)

Requesters are encouraged to consult with the Office of Special Events for guidance on specific decor scenarios.

Section 17 — Audio/Visual & Technology

17.1 What Is Included

The following AV and technology resources are available for campus events at no additional charge, subject to availability and advance reservation:

- Ceiling-mounted projector and projection screen (in equipped spaces)
- Built-in sound system with handheld and lapel microphone capability (in equipped spaces)
- HDMI and VGA connectivity (adapters available upon request)
- Wireless internet access (general campus WiFi)
- Standard presentation podium with built-in AV controls (in equipped spaces)

17.2 What Is Not Included

The following are not provided by Office of Special Events or Facilities and must be sourced by the event host:

- Professional concert or performance sound and lighting systems
- Video production, livestreaming, or broadcast equipment
- Outdoor AV equipment (generators, weatherproof systems)
- Simultaneous translation or assistive hearing systems
- LED walls, video mapping, or large-format display technology

17.3 External AV Vendor Policy

External AV vendors operating on campus must comply with all vendor requirements in Section 10. Additionally, external AV vendors must coordinate with the University IT department at least fourteen (14) business days before the event to review connectivity needs, network access requirements, and integration with existing building systems. The University IT department reserves the right to restrict any network access that poses a security risk.

17.4 IT Support Request Process

Requests for on-site IT support during an event must be submitted through the IT Help Desk no less than fourteen (14) business days before the event. IT support for events outside of business hours is available on a limited basis and must be requested in advance. Emergency IT support on event day is not guaranteed.

17.5 Equipment Responsibility

Event hosts are financially responsible for any damage to university-owned AV equipment that occurs during their event. Equipment damage will be assessed during the post-event space inspection, and repair or replacement costs will be invoiced to the event host. Equipment must be returned to its original location and configuration at the conclusion of the event.

Section 18 — Parking & Transportation

18.1 Guest Parking Policies

Parking on campus is managed by Campus Safety. General event guest parking is available in designated lots, subject to availability. The Office of Special Events will communicate the designated parking areas. Event hosts are responsible for informing guests of parking availability and or restrictions.

18.2 VIP Parking Procedures

Requests for reserved VIP or speaker parking must be submitted to Campus Safety through the Office of Special Events at least five (5) business days before the event. A maximum of ten (10) reserved parking spaces may be designated per event, unless approved by the Director of Campus Safety. Reserved spaces must be clearly marked and monitored by event staff or Campus Safety during the event.

18.3 Bus and Large Vehicle Access

Events involving charter buses, large catering trucks, delivery vehicles, or other oversized vehicles must coordinate vehicle routes and parking areas with Campus Safety no less than seven (7) business days before the event. Oversized vehicles must not park in designated fire lanes or obstruct any emergency access route.

Section 19 — Event Day Operations

19.1 Check-In Procedures

On the day of the event, the designated on-site coordinator must check in with a Campus Safety representative upon arrival. This check-in confirms the coordinator's presence, reviews the day-of timeline, and addresses any outstanding questions. Check-in must occur at least one (1) hour before setup begins.

19.2 On-Site Point of Contact Requirements

The on-site coordinator must be reachable by mobile phone at all times during the event. In the event that the on-site coordinator must leave the event for any reason, they must designate and communicate a replacement to the Office of Special Events staff immediately.

19.3 Timeline Adherence

Events must begin setup, start, and end at the confirmed times in the event reservation. Unapproved extensions of the event — including setup running past the confirmed time, programming exceeding the scheduled end time, or breakdown extending beyond the reserved window — are subject to after-hours fees and may impact future reservation privileges.

19.4 Authority of Office of Special Events Staff During Events

The Office of Special Events staff present during an event have full operational authority to enforce the policies in this manual. Their instructions regarding timeline, space use, vendor activity, crowd management, or any policy compliance matter must be followed promptly by the event host and all associated personnel. Refusal to comply with the Office of Special Events staff directives is grounds for immediate event termination.

Section 20 — Cleanup & Damage Policy

20.1 Required Cleanup Standards

All event hosts are responsible for leaving the event space in the same condition in which it was found, as documented during the pre-event walkthrough. Required cleanup tasks include:

- Removal of all event-specific materials, signage, decor, and supplies
- Disposal of all trash in designated receptacles or dumpsters
- Return of all furniture to its standard configuration (unless otherwise agreed with Facilities)
- Reporting any spills, stains, or minor damage to Office of Special Events staff before vacating

20.2 Trash Disposal

Event hosts are responsible for the proper disposal of all event-generated trash. Event hosts must use available campus receptacles or arrange for their own disposal. The university will assess a cleaning fee if excessive trash is left behind.

20.3 Damage Reporting Process

Any damage to university property occurring during or as a result of an event must be reported to the Office of Special Events immediately. Event hosts should not attempt to repair damage themselves. The Office of Special Events will document the damage and involve Facilities Management for assessment. Photographic documentation by both parties will be taken.

20.4 Financial Responsibility for Damages

The event host is financially responsible for the repair or replacement cost of any university property damaged during their event. Damage costs will be assessed by Facilities Management and invoiced to the event host within 10 business days of the event. Failure to pay damage invoices will result in suspension of reservation privileges and may be referred to University collections processes.

Section 21 — Cancellations & Changes

21.1 Cancellation Deadlines & Refunds

Event cancellations must be submitted in writing to the Office of Special Events as early as possible. Refunds are processed according to the schedule in Section 12.4. To initiate a cancellation, the event host must submit a written cancellation request to the Office of Special Events email. Verbal cancellations will not be honored.

21.2 Rescheduling Policy

An approved event may be rescheduled once without penalty, provided the rescheduling request is submitted at least 14 days before the original event date and an alternate date is available. A second reschedule request will be treated as a cancellation of the original event and initiation of a new reservation request. Rescheduling does not carry forward any fees already paid; an invoice adjustment will be issued.

21.3 Weather-Related Changes

For outdoor or partially outdoor events, the event host is encouraged to develop a weather contingency plan. If severe weather is forecast on the event date, the Office of Special Events will communicate with the event host to evaluate options. The decision to cancel an outdoor event due to weather is made jointly by the Office of Special Events and the event host. Indoor backup spaces may be available but are not guaranteed.

21.4 University-Initiated Cancellations

The university reserves the right to cancel any event at any time for reasons including but not limited to: campus emergency or safety threat, loss of power or essential utilities, damage to the event space, conflict with a university priority event, or mandate by university administration. In cases of university-initiated cancellation, a full refund will be issued as described in Section 12.4.

Section 22 — Post-Event Procedures

22.1 Space Inspection Process

Following a campus event, the Office of Special Events will conduct a post-event space inspection to assess the condition of the venue.

22.2 Incident Reports

If any incident occurred during the event (as defined in Section 13.4), the event host must submit a completed Incident Report Form to the Office of Special Events within 24 hours of the event. The Office of Special Events will compile the incident report with any Campus Safety documentation and retain it in the event file. Incident reports are confidential but may be disclosed to university administration, legal counsel, or law enforcement as appropriate.

22.3 Damage Assessments

If damage is identified during the post-event inspection, Facilities Management will prepare a written damage assessment within five (5) business days. The assessment will include a description of the damage, photographic documentation, and an estimated cost of repair or replacement. The event host will receive the assessment.

Section 23 — Compliance & Violations

23.1 Types of Violations

Policy Violations

A policy violation occurs when an event host, their guests, vendors, or on-site staff fail to comply with any provision of this manual. Examples include: unauthorized use of prohibited decor, exceeding capacity limits, failure to submit required documentation, and disregarding Office of Special Events staff directives.

Damage Violations

A damage violation occurs when university property is damaged during an event, regardless of intent. The event host is held financially responsible as outlined in Section 21.

Unauthorized Use

Unauthorized use occurs when a group occupies a campus space without an approved reservation, uses a space beyond its approved time window, or uses a space for a purpose not reflected in the approved request.

23.2 Penalty Structure

Violation Level	Consequence
First Offense (minor)	Written warning; notation in event file
Second Offense or Major First Offense	Financial penalty of \$100–\$500; mandatory meeting with the Office of Special Events
Third Offense or Severe Violation	Suspension of reservation privileges for 1–2 semesters
Repeated Severe Violations	Permanent revocation of reservation privileges
Unauthorized Use	\$250 fine + rate for time used; possible escalation
Failure to Pay Damage Invoice	Suspension of privileges

23.3 Escalation to Administration

Violations involving threats to safety, conduct violations under the Student Code of Conduct, potential legal liability, or repeated non-compliance will be escalated to the appropriate administrative office:

- Dean of Students & Office of Special Events Staff (student organization violations)
- Office of the Provost (faculty/departments violations)
- VP for Marketing Strategy Impact & Innovation (staff/departments violations)
- Office of the President (legal liability, unauthorized use, contract disputes)

Section 24 — Forms & Required Documents

The following forms are required for various stages of the event planning process. All forms are available in the Office of Special Events office and on the university intranet. Forms must be submitted in their complete, official version; unofficial or altered forms will not be accepted.

Form Name	Purpose & When Required
Venue Request Form	Required for ALL event reservations. Initiates the approval process.
Facilities Request Form	Required for any setup, breakdown, or logistical support from Facilities Management.
Vendor Agreement Form	Required for all third-party vendors providing services at campus events.
COI Submission Form	Required for all external events and when vendors require liability documentation.
Incident Report Form	Required within 24 hours of any incident occurring during an event.

Section 25 — Definitions

Term	Definition
External Client	Any individual, organization, company, or community group that is not affiliated with Huston-Tillotson University as a current student, employee, or enrolled academic partner.
Internal Department	A university academic or administrative department operating under the HT organizational structure and funded through the university budget.
Event	A planned gathering of 10 or more individuals in a designated space for a specific purpose, activity, program, meeting, or celebration.
Student Organization	A student group, club, or co-curricular body officially recognized by the Office of Student Affairs and registered with Campus Life.
Setup Time	The period before the official event start time during which furniture, equipment, and decor are arranged. Setup time is part of the room reservation window.
Event Time	The period during which programming, activities, or the gathering is actively occurring and guests are in attendance.
Breakdown Time	The period after the event ends during which all materials, equipment, and decor are removed and the space is restored. Breakdown time is part of the room reservation window.
Vendor	Any third-party company or individual providing contracted goods or services in connection with a campus event, including caterers, AV companies, photographers, florists, and entertainment acts.
Large-Scale Event	Any event classified as Tier 3 (200+ guests) or Tier 3+ (high-risk), subject to full planning requirements, mandatory security coordination, and the complete set of documentation requirements.
Run of Show	A minute-by-minute or hour-by-hour written timeline of all event activities, personnel arrivals, and logistical milestones, submitted before the event and managed by the on-site coordinator on event day.
Master Calendar	The official university-wide scheduling calendar maintained by Office of Special Events that reflects all confirmed campus events and serves as the authoritative source for scheduling and conflict resolution.
Blackout Date	A period designated by the Office of Special Events and university administration during which event reservations are restricted or prohibited due to academic, institutional, or operational priorities.
Certificate of Insurance (COI)	A document issued by an insurance carrier confirming that an event host or vendor carries active general liability insurance coverage that meets the university's minimum requirements.
On-Site Coordinator	The designated individual responsible for managing the event on the day of, serving as the primary point of contact. Must be the on-campus or off-campus advisor.

Section 26 — Appendices

Appendix A — Blackout Dates (Current Academic Year)

The full list of blackout dates for the current academic year is published annually by the Office of Special Events no later than August 1 on the htu.edu website.

Appendix B — Venue Capacities Chart

Venue / Space	Max Capacity	Standard Layout
Agard-Lovinggood Auditorium	166	Theater
Davage-Durden Student Union	250	Open Configuration
Dickey-Lawless Science Building Auditorium	156	Theater
Evans Industrial Building Lecture Hall	50	Lecture
Grounds/Athletic Field	3,000+ (outdoor)	Open Configuration
King-Seabrook Chapel	362	Theater
Mary E. Branch Gymnasium	600	Open Configuration

Appendix C — Vendor Agreement Summary

All vendors must sign the Huston-Tillotson University Vendor Agreement, which outlines the terms and conditions of operating on campus. Key provisions include:

- Compliance with all university policies and this events manual
- Liability for damage caused by vendor personnel or equipment
- Insurance requirements as described in Section 14
- Restrictions on solicitation, photography, and access to non-event areas
- Agreement to depart the campus by the confirmed load-out time

The full Vendor Agreement Form is available from the Office of Special Events office.

Appendix D — Campus Contact Directory

Office / Department	Contact Info
Office of Special Events	events@htu.edu 512.505.3382
Facilities Management	facilities@htu.edu 512.505.3273
Office of Campus Safety	officeofcampussafety@htu.edu 512.505.3250
Office of Student Affairs	studentaffairs@htu.edu 512.505.3320
Information Technology	helpdesk@htu.edu 512.505.3249
Campus Catering Partner	jmanuel@htu.edu 512.505.3261
Office of the Provost	officeoftheprovoat@htu.edu
Office of The President	officeofthepresident@htu.edu
Accounts Payable	accountspayable@htu.edu 512.505.3229