

Birthday Party Policies

Cancellation and Rescheduling

To be eligible for a refund, minus a \$50 administrative fee, or to reschedule a birthday party, the Museum must receive a written request no later than three weeks prior to the confirmed birthday party. The only exceptions are for inclement weather and illness. If a birthday party is canceled due to inclement weather, the Museum will reschedule the birthday party or provide a full refund. We are able to offer a refund for a birthday party cancelled more than 48 hours ahead of time due to a positive covid-19 test taken by the birthday child or the party organizer.

Party Schedule

A 30 minute set up window is available prior to the party.

The birthday party program will last 1.5 hours and include:

- 15 minute welcome activity
- 45 minute hands-on project led by a Museum Educator
- 30 minute period for birthday celebration (led by birthday family).

Please clean and leave the classroom 15 minutes after the birthday party finishes.

The party will be led by a Museum Educator but the party host, or an adult designated by the host, must remain in the room and is responsible for the children at all times.

Activities

Activities are led by a Museum Educator and are specific to each theme. Changes are not possible to the theme with less than 48 hours notice. The activities are designed for children ages 3-6 but younger or older children are welcome to participate at the discretion of the party host. There can be no more than 20 participating children for the safety and enjoyment of all, but non-participating older or younger siblings are welcome to be present.

Guest Count

If you don't have an accurate guest count until the day of the party, you may pay for additional children on the day of the party. A staff person will contact you to confirm the party and answer any last questions. At that time, you will be asked to provide an estimate of how many children will attend. We can accommodate a maximum of 20 participating children at the party (the birthday child is included in this number).

Party guests' parents are welcome to stay and participate in the birthday party with their children (no adult fee).

Admission to the exhibitions is included for all participating children and up to 6 adults. These admissions are covered by your membership benefits and the birthday party cost. If additional adults or non-participating children need admission wristbands, these can be purchased ahead of time online or in our visitor center Thursday through Monday from 10am-4pm. When purchased together, the group discount rate is \$5 per person.

Non-participating Children

Younger siblings are welcome to attend with no participation, at no cost. Party and craft materials are only provided for the number of paid participants.

How will my guests know where to go?

Ask that your guests check in at the Museum's Information Desk upon their arrival. Staff will direct them to the correct classroom. Your classroom space will be determined the week of the party and is dependent on other events taking place in the museum.

Decorations and Equipment

The party host is responsible for all decorations. You may hang decorations with sticky putty (that we provide). No tape is allowed. Noisemakers, balloons and piñatas are not permitted. This is a museum-mandated policy. The ceilings in the

Great Hall and classrooms are too high so if a balloon was let go it would be very difficult or impossible to get down. The only place to hang a piñata would be the light fixtures, which is unsafe. The birthday party host is given 30 minutes prior to the party for set up. We cannot accommodate earlier set up times.

The Museum provides up to six 5-foot round tables and chairs and two rectangular tables (approximately 6-ft long, 2-ft wide). Please bring your own table coverings.

Music players are allowed. Please inform Museum staff if you are planning to bring one.

In order to expedite the security check, the Museum advises that participants bring gifts in bags rather than wrapped so guards can see the contents.

Food

The National Building Museum does not provide party food. Refreshments such as snacks, drinks, and birthday cake are allowed, and must be brought by the birthday family. The birthday family is responsible for plates, cups, napkins, and utensils. Food cannot be delivered to the National Building Museum; any catering must be picked up at the restaurant. We recommend that you keep food preparation simple since the time provided for eating is 30 minutes: instead of a full lunch, we suggest that you bring snacks, cake, and drinks. We do not offer a refrigerator, but you are welcome to bring a cooler/ice. Alcoholic beverages are prohibited.

Parking

The birthday family receives one parking permit to park in the Museum parking lot on the 4th Street NW side of the building. Please note that our parking lot is first come, first parked, and thus we cannot guarantee parking in our lot even with a parking pass. The parking lot is monitored by the Government Services Administration (GSA), who determines how many spaces can be used, and we cannot offer more than one parking pass.

After parking in the lot, enter the museum through the 4th Street/Employee entrance (clearly marked by an awning), and meet the Museum Teacher at the 4th Street Security Guard's Desk where you can pick up your parking permit and a cart to bring decorations inside. Place the permit on the dashboard in your car. For morning parties, this is the only entrance that will be open at the time of your arrival since it is before the museum opens at 10am.

We advise encouraging your guests to use the Metro to get to and from the Museum or to allow extra time to find parking. Metered parking for guests is located on 5th, F, and G Streets. Nearby parking garages are located at the Capital One's 6th Street entrance and at the corner of 7th and H Streets.