



Use of Museum and Park Grounds Photograph Policy

Current as of 1 December 2024

The History Center at Courthouse Square can serve as an amazing backdrop to any photo shoot. From the simplistic beauty of the courtroom to the beautiful texture of the Murdoch cabin, those with an eye for design will appreciate the diversity of our grounds!

However, the Courthouse Square first and foremost a museum and as the stewards of this history and the grounds, the Berrien County Historical Association has established the following policy related to the use of the grounds and museum for photo shoots:

Non-commercial shoots by individuals for purposes such as pre-dance group photos do not need to seek permission to use the grounds but are **required to notify** the museum staff of their intention, even if the pictures are taken after hours.

- Due to the nature of our grounds, we highly recommend anyone in formal wear to watch their step if venturing off the pathways or jail plaza
- Lighting is limited on the grounds and twilight photos are best taken on the west-side of the property where there is ample lighting
- Guests are responsible for any damages to the museum or property
- Jungle-gym behavior will not be tolerated, and guests may be asked to leave if they are found climbing on any part of the property
- If a group opts to enter a building to take their photographs, flash photography is not allowed in exhibit spaces

All commercial photographers (i.e. family photo sessions, headshots, etc.) are **required to notify** the BCHA of their intention to use the property in any capacity and may need to schedule specific times depending on the size or complexity of the shoot to ensure both photo shoot and museum goers can enjoy the museum.

- There is no rental fee required unless the shoot requires exclusive use of any location (see our website for more information), but donations are welcomed!
- The BCHA requires 48-hours' notice for any use of the buildings and only 24-hours' notice for any use of the grounds

- BCHA events and programs take precedence over other uses of the grounds, photographers who do not respect this will not be welcomed back
- Use of building interiors is allowed and available during regular business hours while the grounds are available dawn until dusk year-round.
 - Note that flash photography is not allowed around artifacts but can be used in places like the Courtroom; please ask our staff if an area is safe for flash photography
- The property and museum must be left as is and any photographer found handling artifacts will be required to vacate the property immediately
- Photographers are 100% responsible for any damages to the museum or property incurred during their session, including theft

Large-scale commercial shoots (i.e. magazine spread, television shows, etc.) are welcomed to use the museum but due to their often expansive and exclusive need for space, they are required to schedule their visit with the BCHA and are subjected to rental fees. Because of their exclusive use of space, all or part of the museum will be closed to the public during any large-scale commercial shoot.

- Because scheduling is required, the latest any shoot can be requested is one (1) week prior to the primary shooting date
- Payment must be rendered no later than the morning of the shoot
 - Deposit refunds will be issued within fifteen (15) days after the event
- BCHA events and programs take precedence over other uses of the grounds, photographers who do not respect this will not be welcomed back
- Flash photography cannot occur around artifacts due to their sensitive nature and directors are encouraged to work with staff to find safe areas for use of flash
- The property and museum must be left as is and any photographer found handling artifacts will be required to vacate the property immediately
- Photographers are 100% responsible for any damages to the museum or property incurred during their session, including theft

Interested parties should contact the museum at 269-471-1202 or by email at info@berriehistory.org.