

# U.S. National Arboretum



3501 New York Avenue, NE, Washington, DC 20002

Phone: (202) 245-4523 [www.usna.usda.gov](http://www.usna.usda.gov)

## **Photography at the U.S. National Arboretum**

### **Policies, Permit, and Fee Schedule**

The mission of the U.S. National Arboretum (USNA) is to conduct research, provide education, and conserve and display trees, shrubs, flowers, and other plants to enhance the environment. In accordance with these objectives, the USNA grounds are open to the public. All visitors are subject to the USNA rules and regulations.

It is the policy of the USNA to permit and encourage photography within the USNA to the fullest extent possible consistent with the protection of its gardens and plant collections and the enjoyment of visitors.

Photographic exercises may not disrupt the flow of vehicles and pedestrians on the grounds of the USNA.

**Permits are required for all commercial and promotional photography and videography shoots, including special occasions and family portraits. For frequently asked questions, [click here](#).**

### **Noncommercial Photography**

Are you taking pictures of the just the National Arboretum's grounds? We welcome you to take photos of our garden and plant collections. A permit is not required.

**Any photography that includes more than the natural and cultural resources of the grounds and includes, subjects, models and/or props requires a permit and fees apply.**

### **Special Occasion and Family Portraits**

Are you looking for an ideal and picturesque location to shoot a special moment in your life ... a proposal/engagement, wedding, maternity or milestone birthday? Do you want a beautiful and natural backdrop for your family portrait? Our gardens and plant collections are a perfect place for you to do so.

### **Commercial and Promotional Photography and Videography**

Photographers for promotional or commercial photo and video shoots (for inclusion in a book, magazine, catalog, model portfolio, TV commercial, social media, motion picture, etc.) are welcome to request a permit for their work or project.

Live and taped interviews, movies, news reports and more have all been filmed at the National Arboretum.

**The National Arboretum cannot endorse or be made to appear to endorse a product or political view.**

## **Photography and Videography Policies and Instructions**

**REQUESTS FOR PERMITS:** All requests for photography and videography permits must include the completed application and submitted via email a minimum of 14 days in advance to [Photography.USNA@usda.gov](mailto:Photography.USNA@usda.gov)

**PERMIT SCHEDULE:** Photography permits are only issued for **Tuesday, Thursdays and Sundays during normal business hours, between 8:00am and 4:30pm. The National Herb Garden is only available after 3:00pm on weekdays.** All other photography sessions reserved for after normal business hours, incur an additional security fee. **Videography permits** that may/may not include photography, **are only issued for after-hours sessions that starts after 5:00pm,** and incur an additional security fee. **No permits are issued for Saturdays.**

**PAYMENT:** Payments are processed via credit card. Payments must be received before the permit is issued.

**PROPS:** Balloons, burning candles, spreading of flower parts and the placing of large furniture are not permitted. Costumes and other small props are permitted within reason if they are not harmful or damaging to the natural resources of the National Arboretum. Props must be approved in advance of your session. Please provide full detail on what you would like to bring in your application.

**DRONES:** Drones are not permitted. "The National Capitol Region is governed by a Special Flight Rules Area within a 30 - mile radius of Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport which restricts all flights in the greater DC area" (FAA website).

**DAMAGES:** Care must be given to ensure plant materials, grounds, or facilities are not damaged in any way. Full restitution for damage to plants, grounds, or facilities is required. The USNA is not responsible for lost or damaged personal property. Please do not leave valuables in your car.

**PLANT MATERIAL:** Digging or planting of any plant material on the grounds is strictly. Absolutely NO cutting of any arboretum plant material is permitted. Nothing is to be trimmed for any reason whatsoever.

Equipment may not be set up within garden beds without USNA approval.

Plant tags are not to be removed for any reason.

**REFUSE:** The Photographer/Videographer is responsible for removing any refuse generated.

**CANCELLATIONS:** At his sole discretion, the Director of the USNA reserves the right to cancel any reservation. In such cases, all fees for the canceled day will be fully refunded.

**AFTER-HOURS SESSION CANCELLATIONS:** Applicants scheduled for after-hours sessions that need to cancel their reservation must contact security at the phone number listed on their permit, no less than 4 hours prior to the scheduled event/session. Failure to do so, will incur an additional security fee of \$180.00 for rescheduled sessions.

**PARKING:** Parking is allowed only in designated areas. All roads must always be kept open for vehicle traffic. Park only on paved roads as far to the right edge of the road as possible, but not on the grass. Trailers with steps must park so that the steps face away from the roadway. All vehicles and equipment must be kept off the lawn and planted areas.

**VISITORS:** Visitors to the grounds may not be prevented from viewing an area being used for photography/videography. They may be asked, politely, not to approach during filming, but once the shot has been completed, the visitors may proceed. No public area may be closed to visitor access.

**DRESSING ROOMS:** Changing rooms are not available. Limited restroom facilities are available but are not designed to handle changing activities. Use by the public of these facilities may not be restricted.

**NUDITY:** Under no circumstances will nudity or scantily clad persons be permitted on the grounds of the arboretum. Articles of clothing which are indecent may not be worn by an employee of the production company.

**ALCOHOL:** Alcoholic beverages are not allowed on the grounds and observation of the presence of such by permittee's cast or crew will result in cancellation of the shoot without any refund of fees.

## Photography and Videography Policies and Instructions - continued

**PHOTO CREDIT:** Proper photo credit must be awarded to the USNA.

**NON-COMPLIANCE:** Cancellation of the filming and denial of future filming privileges may result if the terms and conditions stated herein, are not fully complied with.

# Photography/Videography Fee Schedule

**All fees are paid by credit card only and must be pre-paid 14 days in advance prior to your requested date to reserve your session.**

**There is a \$30 non-refundable administrative fee that is added to the total cost for all sessions.**

Session Time	Session Fee	Administrative Fee	Total Session Fee
Up to 1 Hour	75.00	30.00	105.00
Up to 1 Hour 30 minutes	100.00	30.00	130.00
Up to 1 Hour 45 minutes	115.00	30.00	145.00
2-3 Hours	125.00	30.00	155.00
4-5 Hours	250.00	30.00	280.00
6-8 Hours	500.00	30.00	530.00

**All sessions that are reserved outside of normal business hours (Monday-Friday from 8:00am to 4:30pm) incurs the additional \$180.00 after-hours security fee and it will be added to the total session fee.**

For any questions, please contact us by email at [Photography.USNA@usda.gov](mailto:Photography.USNA@usda.gov)

Application for Photography/Videography Permit  
U.S. National Arboretum

Applicant Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Name of Company/Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

Applicant Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Phone No. \_\_\_\_\_

Fax No. \_\_\_\_\_

Please provide the name, address and phone number of the organization or company that has contracted for your photographic or cinemagraphic services, if applicable:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Date requested for photographic/cinemagraphic services: \_\_\_\_\_

Rain Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Entry time: \_\_\_\_\_

Exit time: \_\_\_\_\_

Number of people working on the project: \_\_\_\_\_ in \_\_\_\_\_ vehicles

Identify all site(s) to be used (for weekdays - no more than 2 locations; and for Sundays - no more than 3 locations are authorized. List at least one specific site.

Itemize equipment to be used (type of camera, size, sound equipment, lights, screens, etc.).

Provide detailed description of the project (what you are proposing to photograph, the purpose of the project, the audience of the project, the number of cast and crew, etc. Be as specific and

detailed as possible). Attach additional pages if required.

Describe the manner in which the images or pictures will be used. Identify where they are to be aired or published.

Security of equipment is provided by the permittee.

All U.S. National Arboretum regulations must be obeyed. Falsification of any of the above information will result in immediate cancellation of permission to photograph with no refund. Permission is granted for the date and time indicated only and is not transferable. Locations other than those approved may not be used.

*According to the Paperwork Reduction Act of 1995, an agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to, a collection of information unless it displays a valid OMB control number. The valid OMB control number for this information collection is 0518-0024. The time required to complete this information collection is estimated to average 10 minutes per response, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information.*

I understand and agree to the conditions above and have not falsified any information about this project.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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**FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY**

Approved / Denied      Approving Official \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Reason for Denial: \_\_\_\_\_

Notification: Director, Security, Facilities Manager, Events Coordinator, Scheduling Coordinator, Front Desk, Aker, Curator(s) \_\_\_\_\_

## Photography Permit - Frequently Asked Questions

Do you provide photographers? What does a permit grant me?

**The National Arboretum does not provide photographers. The permit allows the use of the grounds and the selected location(s) as the backdrop for your session. You may bring cameras and associated equipment (i.e. tripods, lighting etc.).**

Am I able to have my session outside of the days and hours listed?

**Currently, photography sessions are only permitted for Tuesdays, Thursday, and Sundays between 8:00am to 4:30pm. You may request an after -hours session beginning at 5:30pm. There is an additional fee of \$180 for a security officer's supervision for any after- hours photography or videography shoots.**

What happens if it rains on the day of the session?

**We encourage you to monitor the weather leading up to your shoot. If you determine that inclement weather has the potential to disrupt your session, please let us know as soon as possible prior to your arrival on the grounds and we will be happy to work with you to reschedule for another day and time when permits are available.**

Do you allow the use of drones?

**Drones are not permitted. "The National Capitol Region is governed by a Special Flight Rules Area within a 30 - mile radius of Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport which restricts all flights in the greater DC area" (FAA website).**

Can I bring props?

**Balloons, burning candles, spreading of flower parts and the placing of large furniture are not permitted. Costumes and other small props are permitted within reason if they are not harmful or damaging to the natural resources of the National Arboretum. Props must be approved in advance of your session. Please provide full detail on what you would like to bring in your application.**

Are changing rooms available?

**Changing rooms are not available. Limited restroom facilities are available but are not designed to handle changing activities. Use by the public of these facilities may not be restricted. Nudity is prohibited.**

Where I can I take photos?

**You may select (2) locations from any of our garden and plant collections {[Insert link here to gardens and collections page](#)}, as well as the Capitol Columns. Photography sessions are not permitted at the Administration/Visitor Building or the National Bonsai & Penjing Museum.**

Is it possible to have an elopement or small ceremony during my photography session?

**The permit issued is for photography or videography only. Elopements, vow exchanges or ring ceremonies are not covered under this process. Wedding ceremonies of any size and scope are handled by our stakeholder organization, Friends of the National Arboretum (FONA). FONA partners with MTG Hospitality – an event management company. Please contact Natalie Thomas to inquire about having your wedding that the Arboretum.**

**MTG Hospitality**

[natalie@mtghospitality.com](mailto:natalie@mtghospitality.com)

I'm working on a class project; will I need to pay a fee?

**Your application needs to clearly outline the details of the project, as well as the school/institution name and contact information for the instructor. If you can provide this verifiable information the permit fee will be waived.**

I'm taking photos with my phone. Will I need to pay the permit fee?

**Photography permits are independent of equipment or props used. If your photography includes subjects, props, models or anything more than the natural and cultural resources of the National Arboretum a permit is required, and fees are may be applied. We encourage to commemorate your visit but if you are planning for a photoshoot as described above, you must pay the permit fee.**

I am taking photos for a news story. Is a permit required?

**Photography for news purposes is allowed and does not require a permit. Please contact us for details and let us know prior to your arrival.**

Will you block off or close the area while I have my session?

**The National Arboretum is open for all visitors to enjoy. We will not limit public access to any area of the grounds for a photography or videography session. You may request the assistance of security officer to help guide the public around your shoot. The fee for an officer's supervision is \$180 (up to 4 hour block).**

# **USNA GARDENS & COLLECTIONS**

## **ADMINISTRATION BUILDING**

Introduction Garden, Koi and Pool, Rain Garden

## **ASIAN COLLECTIONS**

Camellia Collection, Japanese Woodland, Asian Valley, China Valley, Korean Hillside

## **AZALEA COLLECTIONS**

Glenn Dale Azalea Hillside, Morrison Garden, Lee Garden

## **DOGWOOD COLLECTION**

Dogwoods, Anacostia River Overlooks

## **FERN VALLEY**

Native Plants, Fern Valley Woodland, Prairie, Southeastern Coastal Plain

## **FRIENDSHIP GARDEN**

Arbor House, Wild Meadow, Grasses, Perennials, Ferns

## **CONIFER COLLECTIONS**

Gotelli & Watnong Collections, Spruces, Firs, Japanese Maples, Crapemyrtles

## **STATELY TREASURES (formerly Grove of State Trees)**

## **HOLLY AND MAGNOLIA COLLECTIONS**

## **NATIONAL BOXWOOD COLLECTION**

## **NATIONAL CAPITOL COLUMNS**

## **NATIONAL HERB GARDEN**

Historic Roses, Knot Garden, Specialty Gardens

## **PERENNIAL COLLECTIONS**

Daylilies, Daffodils, and Peonies

## **PRUNUS COLLECTION**

Cherry Blossoms located throughout Arboretum

## **WASHINGTON YOUTH GARDEN**

Located near Fern Valley at Crabtree Road  
Butterfly and Food Crop Gardens



