INTRODUCTION
The Botanic Garden at Georgia Southern University is an educational institution whose mission is to celebrate the nature and culture of the southeastern coastal plain. We are a plant museum first and foremost, and the following policies help ensure the integrity of plant specimens and garden beds. Often, plants not visible are growing below the surface and will be killed by foot traffic. The Garden is home to a variety of rare specimens and it is essential they are undisturbed. Many parties use the Garden and we must keep the facilities at their best and unblemished for everyone.

The Garden offers several beautiful venues for events of all types and number of attendees. From an intimate gathering under the Live Oak, to a Magnolia Allee wedding, to a joyful reception that spills from the Heritage Pavilion out onto the Concert Lawn, our Facility Rental Coordinator will be happy to work with you to find the Garden location that best meets your needs.

Please use this rule of thumb: *If it has the potential to damage the Garden’s plants and buildings, don’t do it.* It will save time and money to let the Garden’s beauty be the primary decoration. We want your dream to come true. If your dream involves elaborate lighting installation, large furniture, or other extensive decorations, you should consider another venue.

ELIGIBILITY
Garden rentals are for private use only. Fundraisers, events with admission charges, or other revenue generating events are not permitted. Funds raised through event rentals support the Garden and its mission.

MAXIMUM GARDEN CAPACITY
The maximum capacity of an event is limited by the package choice. If your attendee head count increases from the original signature date of rental agreement, you must inform the Facility Rental Coordinator no later than the Two Week Detail Meeting, then pay the difference between the original and the new package. The Garden does not guarantee availability of space for an event which exceeds 5% of the final guaranteed head count.

If the Garden’s head count during your event indicates an increase of attendees from your final guarantee, an automatic $1000 fee will be charged. Events expecting more than 250 attendees will be required to rent a tent. *See EVENT SETUP below.*

PARKING
You understand and agree that parking facilities are limited to the main lot. Parking capacity is 90 cars. For up to 75 attendees, parkers are not required. If more than 75 attendees, parkers will be provided and additional off-site parking arrangements are required for more than 90 cars. Off-site arrangements are your responsibility and the local parking ordinances must be followed. Vehicles providing event services may park in the service area.
Neither attendees nor invitees may park in the service area without prior Garden permission. Any vehicles locked in the parking lot after your event may be retrieved during the Garden’s regular operating hours. Vehicle tags and make will be recorded for security purposes.

**ADA ACCESSIBILITY**
Handicapped parking is available in the designated parking lot. All facilities are wheelchair accessible and ADA restrooms are located in the Pavilion.

**HOURS**
The office hours of the Botanic Garden are Monday through Friday from 9:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. The Garden’s hours vary depending on the time of year. Please check our website at [www.georgiasouthern.edu/garden](http://www.georgiasouthern.edu/garden) for the most current operating hours of the Garden.

**RESERVATIONS PROCEDURES**
Events scheduled at the Garden are based on event needs and must be approved in advance by the Facility Rental Coordinator. Inquires can be made by calling 912.478.1149 or by email at garden@georgiasouthern.edu. Reservations will be made on a first-come basis according to availability and receipt of both the Security Deposit and signed rental agreement.

**SECURITY DEPOSIT**
A Security Deposit must be received when your reservation is made. Events expecting 250 attendees or fewer require a Security Deposit of $500. With events expecting more than 250 attendees, the Security Deposit will be $1,000. This is not calculated into the total rental fee.

The Security Deposit will be eligible for return (Return Request Form) no later than six (6) months after your event, once the Garden Director determines the Garden has been returned to pre-event condition, there are no outstanding hourly rental charges or other fees, and when the Garden receives ten (10) photographic images from the event. See PHOTOGRAPHY section below. Your deposit will be returned in the same manner as the original payment.

**TERMS OF PAYMENT**
The Garden will provide a preliminary total based on your final guaranteed head count of attendees. A Security Deposit is due when your reservation is made. See SECURITY DEPOSIT above. One half (½) of the rental fee is due no later than six (6) months before your event. The remaining balance is due no later than three (3) months before your event. Upon completion of the event, you may receive a final bill if there are charges for damages, additional hours, larger head count than provided, or other circumstances accrued.

Any changes to the rental agreement after signing, must be submitted in writing and approved by the Garden Director. Acceptable forms of payment are credit cards (Visa, Master Card, Discover, and American Express), checks (made payable to Botanic Garden at Georgia Southern University), or cash (in person only).

Funds raised through facility rentals support the Garden and its operation. Your support is greatly appreciated.
FAILURE TO PAY
Failure to pay by dates listed in the rental agreement will result in the cancellation of your event, forfeiture of all fees paid, and the scheduled space will be released. All amounts owed to the Garden which are more than sixty (60) days past due, shall be sent to collections and are subject to a service charge of 1 ½ % per month, constituting an annual rate of simple interest of 18%.

CANCELLATION
Once you have reserved your event date and paid the Security Deposit, cancellation at any point will result in forfeiture of the Security Deposit. Cancellation of all or part of your event six (6) months or closer to the event will result in forfeiture of the Security Deposit and any other funds paid. You must notify the Facility Rental Coordinator immediately in writing (mail, fax, or email acceptable) and include the signed Event Cancellation Form.

Cancellation due to weather or conditions beyond the Garden's control results in the forfeiture of all payments made. Determination of extreme or unsafe conditions will be made by the Garden, in consultation with various weather authorities. The Garden highly recommends creating a contingency plan to avoid any last-minute changes required in case the weather does not cooperate.

RESCHEDULING
Should circumstances require you to reschedule your event, you will forfeit the Security Deposit. You may apply other paid funds plus a NEW Security Deposit to reserve a NEW event date within one (1) year from original date, subject to availability, with the possibility of additional fees. Rental rates are subject to change at any time.

ADMITTANCE AND STAFFING
Garden staff will be onsite for your event. Certain events may also require the services of at least one (1) Security Guard at no additional charge. All events involving alcohol require at least one (1) Security Officer for every 125 attendees.

TWO WEEK DETAIL MEETING
You are required to meet with the Facility Rental Coordinator to finalize your event details two weeks prior to your event date. This will ensure all details have been communicated so your event will run smoothly. Please be prepared to make the Facility Rental Coordinator aware of any changes in vendors, number of attendees, or any other plans. Additional event costs may apply.

EVENT DAY DESIGNATED CONTACT (DC)
Every event must have an Event Day Designated Contact (DC) to serve as the contact point person for the Garden staff during your event. The DC’s name and phone number must be provided by the Two Week Detail Meeting. To allow the Garden staff to quickly and easily identify the DC during your event, he/she must contact the Garden staff prior to the start of your event.
EVENT SETUP
Event setup times are included within the event hours established in your rental agreement. Pre-arranged additional hours are available at $100 per hour. Any unscheduled event setup time will be billed at $200 per hour. When establishing event hours, include adequate time to arrive at the Garden, decorate for event, enjoy the event, provide cleanup, and exit. The entire party, including caterers and musicians, must exit the Garden by the completion time established in your rental agreement. Reminder that all unscheduled additional time will be billed at $200 per hour.

Events expecting 250 attendees or less may, but are not required to, have a tent. The tent location and setup must be pre-arranged with the Facility Rental Coordinator. Maximum tent size on the Pavilion Lawn is 40’ x 60’ and only tables and chairs can be used under the Pavilion Lawn tent. Events expecting more than 250 attendees are required to have a tent in the Garden Field.

Garden rental chairs, tables, dance floor, bars, and other lawn destroying elements must be located on bricks or the Pavilion floor only and cannot be used on grass. The Garden can provide black and chrome chairs for up to 175 attendees. The Garden also can provide the following tables for seated attendees: thirty (30) - 5’ rounds, ten (10) - 6’ rectangular, and nine (9) - 8’ rectangular. You may use event supply vendor(s) of your choice.

DECORATING
Decorating for your event is permitted only during the established event hours. Decorating times are included within the event hours established in your rental agreement. Pre-arranged additional hours are available at $100 per hour. Any delivery (floral/tables/chairs/tents) outside the established event hours must be pre-approved by the Facility Rental Coordinator by the Two Week Detail Meeting and may be subject to additional hourly charges. All decorations must be thoroughly removed and cleaned up promptly at the completion of your event.

Any damage from non-compliance will be documented and deducted from the Security Deposit and/or billed based on the total damage charges. Any unscheduled decorating/cleanup time will be billed at $200 per hour. The Garden will not provide ladders, dollies, golf carts, etc. due to liability concerns. You are not allowed to bring personal golf carts or similar vehicles for same reason.

- **ITEMS NOT PERMITTED FOR USE**: Nails, tacks, glue, Velcro, tape, staples, or other techniques that penetrate or stick to any surface of the Garden, including plants, trees, or buildings. Lights or lanterns are not permitted in trees or garden beds. Large open flames or candles are not allowed anywhere in the Garden. Pesticides, fireworks, sparklers, candles, floral petals (real, fabric or plastic), glitter, balloons, paper confetti, rice, and birdseed are not permitted. Wooden chairs and tables cannot be moved from Bland Cottage under any circumstances and the Weathervane Barn will remain locked during events for safety reasons.

- **ITEMS PERMITTED IN GARDEN BEDS**: **NOTHING** is permitted in garden beds, specifically decorations, furniture, lighting, attendees, etc. This is to help ensure the integrity of plant specimens and any new plants not visible growing beneath the surface.
• **ITEMS PERMITTED TO USE:** Cable ties and fishing line may be used to secure decorations. Any additional lighting not provided by the Garden must be shatterproof. Solar or battery powered lighting may be placed along walkways or on grass, but not in garden beds. Small votives contained in glass or other nonflammable containers on tables are permitted. Bubbles, ribbon wands, glow sticks, and **Ecofetti** are permitted. Furniture on grass must be approved by Garden.

**CATERING**
You may use the caterer of your choice, or use GSU Blue Tie Catering (912.478.5073). You are responsible for ensuring the caterers remove all food, equipment, trash, and any catering supplies from the kitchen, leave kitchen counters clean, and sweep floor. Trash cans are provided in the service area. Caterers must provide their own container to dispose of all grease and will not dispose of grease in the sink or in the garden beds. Ice must be disposed of in the gravel area of the service yard only. Cooking techniques such as grilling, smoking, open flame cooking etc. must be pre-approved before catering plans are confirmed. Such cooking techniques will be limited to a Garden designated area.

**ALCOHOL**
You will be responsible for following local, state, and federal laws applicable to the serving of alcoholic beverages. All alcohol must be served by a certified bartender and absolutely no self-service of alcohol is permitted. If an attendee is seen drinking from a liquor bottle, Security will be notified and GSU campus security may be engaged. No kegs are permitted without prior approval from the Garden.

The Garden, GSU, and the Georgia Southern Foundation assume no liability for the serving of alcohol or incidents arising from its use. GSU organizations must adhere to the GSU Alcohol Policy. If alcohol is being served, the Garden requires and will arrange for one (1) Security Officer for every 125 attendees. It is your responsibility, not the Security Officers, to ensure that alcohol is not served to guests under 21 years old. If the number of attendees exceed 125 per Security Officer without prior approval, the Security Deposit will be forfeited. Non-compliance with these regulations will allow the Garden to shut down event.

**SECURITY OFFICERS**
The need for Security Officers is at the discretion of the Garden who will make arrangements for them. Security Officers are secured based on the number of attendees and it is your responsibility to provide an accurate number of attendees by the Two Week Detail Meeting. Security Officers are not available to assist with loading, decorating, cleaning, or any other work for your event. In case of an emergency, call 911. Then the Security Officers and Garden staff should be notified immediately following to ensure the notification of the proper authorities.

**SMOKING**
The Garden is a tobacco-free facility and no smoking is permitted anywhere on the Garden grounds or in any buildings. This includes cigarettes, cigars, chewing tobacco, or any other smoking devices. The Garden will provide a designated smoking section, with ashtrays, and smoking must be limited to this area. At no time is smoking permitted in or near the Weathervane Barn or Bland Cottage.
MUSIC
Both recorded and live music are permitted. Some bands/DJs have specific stage, electrical, and access requirements. Contact the Facility Rental Coordinator to determine if the Garden can meet their specific requirements. Please be considerate of our neighbors with the sound volume and abide by the City of Statesboro Sound Ordinance with all music to conclude by 11 p.m., or by the completion of your event, whichever comes first. Please allow adequate time for cleanup. If the Police notify us that your event is too loud, the Security Deposit will be forfeited and additional costs may be accrued.

EVENT CLEANUP
The goal of “Event Cleanup” is to return the Garden to pre-event condition. Cleanup includes Bland Cottage, Heritage Pavilion, and all other areas used by you and your attendees. Event cleanup times are included within the event hours established in your rental agreement. Pre-arranged additional hours are available at $100 per hour. The entire party, including caterers and musicians, must exit the Garden by the completion time established in your rental agreement. Reminder that all unscheduled additional time will be billed at $200 per hour. If Garden staff determine during your event that the established event hours will not include adequate time for cleanup, they will begin the cleanup process and a cleanup fee will be assessed. NOTE: It takes at least one (1) hour to bring event to conclusion, attendees to exit, cleanup, and remove any personal belongings.

Garden staff cleans up Garden tables and chairs, mops, and removing trash in provided cans. All other clean up and removal of belongings, decorations, musical instruments, food and catering equipment, trash, etc. are the responsibility of renter and on-site rental vendors. You are also responsible to undo or clean anything else that disrupts the central nature of the Garden.

The Garden, GSU, and the Georgia Southern Foundation are not responsible for valuables left after your event. Anything remaining without prior permission will become the property of the Garden and will be disposed of immediately to allow for the next event to proceed.

CHILDREN
Children are welcome in the Garden, but must be under adult supervision at all times. Garden staff is onsite to care for the Garden, not babysit. If children are determined to be unsupervised and disruptive, your Designated Contact will be notified and the Security Deposit will be forfeited. Children must follow all Garden policies, including staying out of the garden beds and out of trees. No Frisbees, balls, other sports equipment, or other toys that have the potential to damage plants are allowed. Non-compliance with these regulations will allow the Garden to confiscate those items.

ANIMALS
Service animals are permitted with approved paperwork certifying service status. All other animals, including pets, are prohibited in the Garden.
DISPLAYS OF ARTWORK, EXHIBITS, AND SCULPTURES
Public gardens are museums and, like any museum, will have ongoing displays, exhibits, artwork, sculptures, and changeovers via plant materials that will not be modified for events. Artwork displayed in the Garden cannot be removed, changed, or covered during any private event. You acknowledge that the Garden is an educational institution for rotating exhibits and displays and cannot guarantee what will be present at time of event.

PHOTOGRAPHY
All photographers, professional or otherwise, must follow the Garden Photography Policy, provided in this packet for distribution to photographer. Please have photographer provide the Garden with ten (10) high resolution, print-ready images from your event and signed Photographer Release allowing use of the photographs for non-sale promotion of the Garden. The images can be in .jpg or .tiff format and should be at minimum, 300 ppi. The images shall be free from watermark or logo. Credit will be provided when possible.

WEDDING INFORMATION
Wedding rehearsals are offered by appointment only and must be scheduled in advance with the Facility Rental Coordinator. Included in your rental agreement is one (1) photography session, up to two (2) hours (normally $100), and must also be scheduled in advance with the Facility Rental Coordinator.