



ZOROASTRIAN ASSOCIATION OF HOUSTON

ZHCC OPERATING GUIDELINES

The following guidelines are based on the consensus arrived at the 'open house' Executive Committee [EC] meeting held on September 30, 2012, attended by ZAH members in a large number and, come into effect from November 11, 2012, the date of the Annual General Meeting of members at which they were adopted and supersede those prepared in 2000.

Other than the section **Donations** which appears on the last page, which will be the EC's responsibility, all other rules shall be monitored by the Building Management Sub-committee [BMSC].

Entry into the Premises

When the premises are not open for a general function or event, entry into both the compound and building is possible only with the unique access FOB available to members on submission of an [Application/Agreement Form](#) to the EC Secretary, and on payment of the prescribed fee.

BMSC may make available FOBs to maintenance staff and party planners at no charge.

Access mechanisms may be changed to accommodate new technologies and controls as needed.

Entry and usage rules, as stated in the said Agreement, shall be abided by at all times. Members should note that entry and exit from the building will be automatically recorded by video cameras and a time recording device. When they are last to depart, members shall be responsible for making sure that all doors and windows are securely closed.

Till such time as the new security system comes into play, the existing procedures for the security card for the sliding gates and the key for the building door will remain in place.

General Rules for Use of the Center

1. The Main Hall and Atrium are available for use by members and their non-member guests [without restriction to race or creed]. Any group activity, other than regularly scheduled meetings, that require use of the Main Hall or the Atrium, will need to be cleared with the BMSC to avoid conflict with other rentals or events. For small gatherings, the smaller rooms should be used preferably.
2. Overnight events may be held only if organized by ZAH or its sub-committees.

3. All notices shall be placed only on the Bulletin Board adjacent to the Prayer Room and none should be pasted on the walls, doors or windows.
4. No one should stick, tape, staple or attach anything to the walls, doors, windows, floor or stage.
5. Members using the Center for private events must abide by the following rules before leaving the premises:
 - a. Trash from all rooms, including all the restrooms and the kitchen, should be picked up and discarded in the dumpster located in the yard near the children's playground.
 - b. All tables and chairs should be returned to their original positions.
 - c. All lights and fans should be turned off.
 - d. When using the air-conditioners, members should keep the temperature at a reasonable setting. For supplemental cooling, fans should be used.
 - e. Thermostats should be reset to 84F in the summer and 68F in the winter before the last member leaves the building.
 - f. Ensure that all doors, including side doors, and windows are locked and that the main sliding gates have been closed before driving off.
 - g. The security alarm near the kitchen side entry gate should be activated after ensuring that all persons have left the building. The last person leaving shall be held accountable if the alarm is not activated. Members should remember that security devices will be recording all exits with timestamps.

Rental Rules [for Members]:

The following shall apply to members who wish to rent the premises. The rates given hereunder are as revised by the BMSC and approved by the EC on April 21, 2013. The BMSC, with the approval of the EC, may further revise these rates as and when deemed necessary. Members are requested to check with the BMSC Chairperson of the rates prevailing.

1. Rental Charges:

MAIN HALL:

[includes Main Hall, atrium, kitchen and restrooms. Excludes library and the other two small rooms.]	\$500 for the day up to 1:00 a.m..
	\$150 for every addl hour after 1:00 a.m.

ATRIUM:

[includes only kitchen and restrooms]	\$120 per hour for minimum 4 hours = \$480
	\$100 for every addl hour

The Library and the other two smaller rooms shall not be rented out nor made available at all whatsoever.

For the Main Hall, pre-rental clean-up, including set-up, and post-function clean-up shall be provided by BMSC at the charge of \$700. Security service shall also be provided by BMSC at a charge of \$240 for two security officers for four hours with an additional charge of \$70 per hour beyond four hours. The renter shall not be allowed to provide these services.

Renters of the atrium only shall be responsible for the set-up and pre and post-cleaning of the rented premises. If the premises are not left in a clean condition after the event, BMSC reserves the right to deduct the cost of cleaning from the deposit. Security service will not be provided to renters of only the atrium.

A deposit of \$250 shall be payable by the renter in advance along with the above mentioned rental charges. The said deposit will be refunded to the renter within ten business days but after deducting therefrom the charges for additional cleaning, if any, and/or cost of damages incurred as determined by BMSC on inspection.

On application to BMSC, any of the small rooms, other than the library, may be made available at a flat rental rate of \$50 for a four-hour period for a private gathering of members only for performing Zarathushti religious ceremonies and/or discourse on Zarathushti religion.

For Mukhtad, Farvardigan and Khordad Sal ceremonies, use of one of the smaller rooms (library excepted) shall be allowed at the existing charge of \$50 for the entire period.

Notes:

1. The Center's sound system is not available for renting out.
2. Rental charges for non-members range between \$2,000 and \$3,500 for gatherings not exceeding 350 persons and are limited to specified hours. Details are available from the Chairperson of the BMSC.
3. Reservations will be on first-come-first-served basis on application to BMSC for only those members who have paid their subscription for the year.
4. A renter shall not sub-lease, re-lease or give permission for another party the use of the rented areas.
5. A deposit must be paid by the renter at the time of reservation – see ZHCC Rental Agreement - which will be refunded within fifteen business days of the function upon passing inspection of the premises by the BMSC for any damage. In case of any damage or breakage, the repair/replacement cost shall be deducted from the deposit and should the cost exceed the amount of deposit, the renter member shall be liable for payment of the difference within ten days of being notified.
6. At their discretion, the EC may allow a member or a group of members [hosts] use of the Main Hall and/or the Atrium gratis for tea, lunch or dinner for thanking the participants of a fund raiser/event organized by them. Such permission may be given only on the assurance by the hosts that:
 - At least half the proceeds of the function/event held have been donated to ZAH,
 - The guests shall be limited to sponsors or organizers of the event and cast, helpers and parents of performers under the age of 16 involved in that event,
 - They will arrange for all necessary supplies and agree to arrange for the setup and after-function cleanup at their own cost.

Hosts are expected to use the Atrium, and not the Main Hall when the number of attendees is small.

Rules for Use of the Prayer Room

1. The Prayer Room is open at all times, including at rituals and ceremonies performed therein, to all members and their spouses, Zarathushti non-members and their spouses, and non-Zarathushtis when accompanied by a member. All entering the Prayer room shall remove their footwear and cover their heads.
2. Only Zarathushti prayers and rituals shall be recited or performed in the Prayer Room.
3. Post-funeral ceremonies for deceased relatives of a member, such as, *Sarosh*, *Uthamna* and *Mukhtad* may be performed by only ordained Zarathushti priests in the Prayer Room, but at no time shall any ZAH member or non-member Zarathushti, male or female married to a non-Zarathushti, or non-Zarathushti, be denied access to the Prayer Room during such ceremonies.

For a larger congregation at post-funeral ceremonies, the Main Hall can be made available by notification to BMSC, provided that the Hall has not already been rented out. The Main Hall is available gratis for such ceremonies. The set-up and post-ceremony clean-up shall be carried out by the member users at their own cost. It is expected that when *sukhad* and *loban* normally kept by ZAH in the Prayer Room is used by the person, the same shall be replaced at the very earliest.

4. Navjote and marriage ceremonies may be held in the Main Hall or Atrium for which rental charges as stated under **Rental Rules** above shall apply.

5. On application, BMSC in consultation with the EC, may allow performance of any Zarathushti ceremony in the Prayer Room, including:
 - Navjote of a child of at least one Zarathushti parent
 - Marriage of couples involving at least one Zarathushti

Provided that:

- a. Such ceremony is performed by an ordained Zarathushti priest,
- b. There is no overflow of attendees into any other room, including the Main Hall and Atrium.
- c. Member or non-member rentals will not be asked to postpone their events. At such ceremonies, use of the kitchen shall not be allowed when the Main Hall or Atrium has been rented out, and
- d. There is strict adherence to clause [1] above.

It is, however, preferred that navjotes and weddings be performed in the Main Hall or the Atrium with families needing financial assistance being accommodated for defraying the rental charges through donations or from a fund to be created especially for this purpose.

6. No food or drink, other than that required for the performance of a religious ceremony, shall be brought into the Prayer Room.
7. The Prayer Room shall not be rented.

Donations

Large donations for specific items to be named after the donor member, or as requested by him, will be accepted only if an additional amount as may be determined by the EC, is set aside by the donor for the repairs and maintenance of the item during its expected life span.

Similarly, contributions collected for expansion or addition to the premises and/or facilities, will be considered by the EC only if an adequate amount as may be determined by the EC is set aside as a reserve for the upkeep and maintenance of the facility/enlarged premises.