

NIH POLICY MANUAL

1363 - NIH CONFERENCE FACILITIES

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1. **Explanation of Material Transmitted:** This chapter is being revised to reflect changes in the guidelines and procedures for the use of the NIH conference facilities. It includes a listing of the NIH conference facilities and the conference space controlled by NIH Institutes, Centers and Divisions.
2. **Filing Instructions:**
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A. Purpose:

This chapter provides guidelines and procedures for the use of the NIH conference facilities under the control of the Conference Services Branch (CSB), Division of Space and Facility Management (DSFM), Office of Research Services (ORS). This includes a listing of the conference rooms, description of the functional capabilities of each room, and the procedure for reserving the rooms including promulgation of scheduling. It also provides information on conference space controlled by NIH Institute, Center and Division (ICD).

B. References:

1. The NIH Manual [26101-20-1](#) "Occasional Use of NIH Controlled Facilities by the Public" establishes the responsibility for use of conference space for

occasional use by the public.

2. The NIH Manual Issuance [26101-17-1](#) "Acquisition of Temporary Non-NIH Conference Space" provides guidance for procuring non-NIH conference space.

C. Responsibilities:

1. The CSB is responsible for the management and maintenance of the NIH conference facilities that are not controlled by ICDs, and the oversight of the Natcher Conference Center contractor; revision and issuance of guidelines regarding use of space in the NIH conference facilities and conference protocol; evaluation of the conference space and services utilization; initiation of improvements based on those results and the patron suggestions; coordination of large-scale conferences with the ICD meeting planner and ICD conference management contractor; and distribution of information on local hotels and public transportation for out-of-town patrons.
2. The ICDs are responsible for ensuring that to the maximum extent possible, events are scheduled to maximize the use of Federally controlled conference rooms.

D. Definitions:

1. ICD Conference Space - Controlled by the NIH ICDs
2. NIH Conference Facilities - Meeting rooms and services available on and off campus which are under the control of CSB, DSFM, ORS
3. Other Government Conference Space - Conference space under the control of non-NIH Government organizations, i.e., PHS, DHHS, GSA, etc.
4. Non-Government Conference Space - Commercial conference space that is not under the control of Government organizations. (ICDs must obtain CSB approval before procuring)
5. Patron - A person using NIH conference facilities
6. Meeting Planner - ICD representative (employee or ICD conference management contractor) who reserves and plans events in NIH conference facilities
7. Teleconferencing - Remote conferring via phone or video
8. Phone Conference Calling - Conferring with one or more parties via special amplification phone equipment
9. Video Teleconferencing - Conferring with one or more parties via video teleconferencing equipment

E. Policy:

The NIH conference facilities are available to all NIH organizations, HHS organizations located on the NIH campus, NIH recreation and welfare groups, and NIH employee associations. Any other HHS and Federal Government organizations may use NIH conference facilities if available. See Section H, "Reserving NIH Conference Space." If no suitable conference space is available in the NIH conference facilities, ICD conference space described in Appendix 2, or HHS/PHS facilities, ICDs may request to procure non-Government space. See NIH Manual Chapter 26101-17-1, "Acquisition of Temporary non-NIH Conference Space." The following rules are common to all NIH conference facilities:

1. Food as part of an event is permitted in the NIH conference rooms with the written permission of the CSB Branch Chief or designated representative. The ICD sponsoring the event is responsible for ordering food, setup and serving arrangements in CSB approved space, removal of all catering implements, leftovers, waste, and the payment of the caterer (consult with the ICD Administrative Office about funding arrangements). See Appendix 4, Guide for the Authorization Request to Serve Food.
2. Smoking is prohibited in all conference facilities, as well as in the buildings in which they are located.
3. Consumption of alcoholic beverages is prohibited, unless written approval has been obtained from the Associate Director for Research Services, ORS.
4. Unless specified in writing, the rearrangement or removal of furniture and equipment from the conference facilities is not allowed.

All NIH conference facilities and restroom facilities are accessible for the physically disabled. Assistive listening devices for the hearing impaired are available in most NIH conference facilities.

F. Appendix Information:

Appendix 1 provides hours of operation, phone and fax numbers, room numbers, room size, room capacity, and room arrangement option(s) for each NIH conference facility.

Appendix 2 provides a list of ICD controlled conference rooms/auditoriums, a contact point, and a phone number. Please note that the ICD set their own use priorities and guidelines for the conference room(s) they control.

Appendix 3 describes the presentation, teleconferencing, and recording capabilities available in the NIH conference facilities.

Appendix 4 provides a guide for the Authorization Request to Serve Food.

G. Priorities for Assignment of Conference Space:

The assignment of NIH conference space is subject to the following priorities listed in

descending order of importance. In the case that a scheduled event needs to be displaced as a result of a higher priority event, every effort will be made to accommodate the displaced activity in another NIH conference facility. If this is not possible, the ICD affected by such a change will be allowed to procure commercial space at its own expense.

Priority 1:

The Director, NIH, and reservations made through the Office of the Director for HHS Secretary and equivalent or higher Government Officials

Priority 2:

ICD Advisory Councils and Boards of Scientific Counselors

Meeting Periods for Councils and Boards are as follow:

- Last week of January through first week of March;
- May through June; and
- September through first of November.

The ICDs are advised to reserve space for these meetings two years in advance at the beginning of each of the three meeting periods. The meetings are limited to conference rooms in Building 31/6C, Wilson Hall in Building 1, and the conference rooms in the Natcher Conference Center (excluding the auditorium and the video teleconferencing rooms).

Priority 3:

ICD sponsored International, National and Regional Conferences and Symposia

Due to extensive planning requirements for such events, the ICD may reserve space up to three years in advance.

Priority 4:

Official NIH Meetings

Periodic meetings (weekly, bi-weekly, monthly, etc.) may be scheduled for up to two years in advance. Non-periodic meetings may be scheduled for up to one year in advance in any of the areas that are not limited by the above priorities.

Priority 5:

Non-NIH Official Government Meetings

Such meetings may be scheduled for up to one year in advance.

Priority 6:

Non-Official Meetings (i.e., Recreation and Welfare (R&W), Foundation for Advanced Education in the Sciences (FAES) courses, and NIH employee sponsored cultural and recreational events)

Such events may be scheduled for up to one year in advance. In the event of displacement, alternate space will be offered if available.

NOTE: For priority four, reservations for the periods during which the Advisory Councils and Boards meet will be accepted as space is available. Priorities five and six will not be accepted.

Special Use Privileges:

Natcher Building Conference Center, under Priority 4 use, occupants of the Natcher Building will be given priority consideration for Conference Room F.

In research facilities, such as Building 49, priority use of NIH conference rooms will be given to events that concern scientific research.

In Building 1, use of conference room 151 will be given to events scheduled by or with officials of the Office of the Director. In the case that space is available, it may be reserved by any NIH entity, but will be subject to displacement.

NOTE: The CSB reserves the right to move events of all categories, if such moves result in a more efficient use of NIH conference space and/or more suitable room arrangements for higher priority meetings than the one affected by such rescheduling efforts. The CSB staff will immediately advise affected parties of changes.

H. Reserving NIH Conference Space:

The NIH conference space and services are always in high demand. Therefore, reservations should be made at the earliest possible time; however, within the limitations defined for each priority category.

1. Reservation Procedure

All reservations are made on a network conference scheduler system with terminals in most NIH conference facilities on campus and off campus. Read-only access to the network conference scheduler system is available to the ICD (contact CSB for information on the network protocol and the required software).

Before calling, the ICD meeting planner should have available the following

information:

Preferred location, date, time, and services needed for the event.

Upon determining availability of a suitable space, the conference specialist will immediately reserve that space and issue a confirmation number to the meeting planner. A written confirmation report will be mailed to the meeting planner within three days. (The Form NIH 827, Request for Conference Room, has been eliminated because the CSB implemented a network conference scheduler system.)

Reservation requests for multiple and/or periodic meetings should be submitted in writing and mailed or faxed to the NIH conference facility in which the meetings are to be scheduled.

NOTE: The CSB will hold tentative meeting dates for a maximum of five working days before dropping them automatically off the scheduler system.

2. Reservation Reminder Calls

Each space reservation will be confirmed with the meeting planner a minimum of two working days before the event takes place. This action insures that the NIH conference facilities and the meeting planners are ready for the event. The meeting planner is responsible for notifying CSB as far in advance as possible when an event changes or is canceled, to allow others to reserve and use the space.

3. Posting of Event Schedules

A daily event schedule is posted at the entrance(s) of each NIH conference facility. This schedule includes the name of the ICD, title of event, time, and building and conference room number.

4. Availability of NIH Conference Facilities Tours

The CSB staff and Natcher contractor staff will conduct site tours and planning meetings for ICD meeting planners, ICD conference management contractors, and non-NIH Government officials who are involved in the planning and management of symposia, conferences, exhibitions, and large meetings. Appointments should be made with the staff in the conference facility considered for upcoming events.

I. Presentation, Teleconferencing, and Recording Capabilities and Services:

1. Phone Conference Calling

All NIH conference rooms are equipped for phone conference calling. Audio

(phone) teleconferencing must be ordered at the time the reservation for the conference space is made. The CSB and Natcher contractor staff will coordinate the connections with the Telecommunications Branch (TCB).

2. Video Teleconferencing

The CSB operates a number of video teleconferencing rooms (see Appendix 1) with state-of-the-art equipment that permits multi-point connections to any compatible video teleconferencing facilities throughout the world. These rooms are reserved in the same manner as other conference space. The conference services staff will arrange for connections of the parties for the desired date and time. Upon completion of the video teleconference, the TCB will invoice the meeting planner's ICD for line charges incurred. (Inquire about charges when making the reservation.)

3. Broadcasting

All NIH conference facilities have broadcast capabilities for overflow meeting requirements via closed circuit television. Events can also be broadcast to Frederick Cancer Research and Development Center, and other NIH facilities if they can receive closed circuit signals or have cable television. It is the ICD's responsibility to procure the camera crew and equipment for these events through the Video Section, Medical Arts and Photography Branch (MAPB). Call 496-4700.

4. Presentation Equipment and Services

The standard presentation equipment setup in a conference room consists of a slide projector, overhead projector, VCR, and laser pointers. Computer LCD plates are available upon request. In addition, there are permanent white board surfaces available in most of the rooms. If not, portable boards and/or flip charts are available.

Fully trained conference services staff are available to lecturers and presenters for pre-meeting instruction in the use of the presentation equipment. Cameras in fixed positions and on tripods are available to record meetings. However, if an event requires more sophisticated camera work with a professional camera crew, the requesting ICD must plan and purchase this service through MAPB.

The recording of events must be requested at the time of making the room reservation. There are no charges for this service or the tape(s). If duplications of the original tape(s) are required, the ICD meeting planner must furnish tapes one day in advance of the scheduled event. The CSB does not provide editing and cutting of taped material.

Technical expertise is available to ICD staff in selecting and purchasing audio-visual equipment. Call CSB on (301) 496-6876 to arrange for a meeting. Also,

per NIH Manual Issuance 26307-3 Special Clearance and Other Acquisition Procedures, the ICD purchasing agent is required to forward all requests for purchase of audio visual equipment to CSB for clearance.

5. Presentation Equipment Loans

The following equipment is available from loan pool for official use only: 35mm slide projector, transparency overhead projectors, 16mm film projectors, video consoles (VHS), audio recorders (reel and cassette), public announcement systems, and computer LCD plates. To request the use of audio visual equipment other than in the NIH conference facilities, call any NIH conference facility to reserve the equipment for a specific event, date, and time. When picking up the equipment, the requesting ICD employee must sign a property pass. The CSB will charge non-returned or damaged equipment to the ICD to which the property pass was issued.

- #### 6. Simultaneous Language Interpretation Capabilities
- There are simultaneous interpretation capabilities at the Natcher Conference Center and the Building 31, Room 10C . However, it is the ICD's responsibility to plan and purchase the service of interpreters.

J. Conference Protocol and Refreshment Breaks:

The NIH conference facilities are designed to accommodate a wide spectrum of meeting and presentation requirements.

Appendix 1 provides information about the size of the conference rooms/auditoriums, the basic room arrangements, the hours of operation, and the nearest cafeteria within each conference facility.

1. Conference Protocol

The CSB provides water and cups for conference and classroom style events, but not for theater style arrangements. Pencils and pads for note taking are also provided.

Additional services such as making copies (maximum 100 per event), sending faxes, cardboard boxes for the packing of meeting materials, etc. are furnished upon request.

At each conference facility, conference specialists will take messages and distribute them to patrons. Conference specialists will also call a taxi and make available to patrons information about local lodging, public transportation, parking, etc.

2. Refreshment Breaks

At the time of the event planning, a conference specialist will work with the

meeting planner to decide approximate times for coffee and lunch breaks. The campus cafeterias are primarily designed for use by NIH employees and therefore, can not accommodate groups of 50 or more patrons during the prime lunch hour, 12 noon to 1 p.m. Careful planning of each event's refreshment and lunch breaks will contribute to the patrons' and the building occupants' satisfaction.

In the conference facilities of Building 31 and Natcher, refreshments can be bought at a concession stand during morning and afternoon breaks. This service is not provided in other NIH conference facilities.

K. Charges for Staffing Support Before or After Posted Business Hours:

If an event requires staffing support for presentations, teleconferencing, recording, and/or other direct meeting support before or after normal hours of operation, the requesting ICD will be charged for the overtime cost incurred. When making the room reservation, the meeting planner shall provide the CAN. The CSB will generate the charge upon completion of the event requiring overtime.

NOTE: The normal hours of operation for each NIH conference facility are provided in Appendix 1.

L. Safety and Security in the NIH Conference Facilities:

All NIH conference facilities are operated as openly as any other non-restricted NIH facilities during normal hours of operation. They are locked from the stated closing time to the stated opening time. Following restrictions apply to specific facilities:

1. In Building 31, meetings may be scheduled outside the stated hours of operation. When making a reservation for an after business hours meeting, CSB staff will inform the meeting planner that a key for the reserved room must be picked up in the CSB office before 5 p.m. on the day of the meeting (Friday for weekend meetings). The meeting planner or representative must unlock the conference room for the patrons, lock it upon completion of the meeting, and deposit the key in the CSB office lock box. (The NIH Police no longer perform this function.)
2. In Building 49, meetings may be scheduled outside the stated hours of operation by building occupants. The meeting room will be left open to permit after hours access. The meeting planner or representative will be responsible for locking the room upon completion of the meeting.
3. In the Natcher Conference Center, meetings will be scheduled outside the normal business hours only with a contractor employee present. (See Section K for charges.)
4. In Building 1, no meetings will be scheduled outside the stated hours of operation.

5. In EPN, Federal Building, and Two Rockledge Centre, meetings may be scheduled outside the stated hours of operation. Upon notification of meetings by CSB, the NIH security guard will open the scheduled room(s) and lock the room(s) upon completion of meeting(s).
6. In 6100 Executive Boulevard, no meetings will be scheduled outside the stated hours of operation.

NOTE: The CSB staff and the contractor staff do not assume responsibility for items left unattended or left behind by patrons. Items found will be tagged and kept in a safe place for 30-calendar days before donating them to a Clinical Center charity. Upon realization of having lost an item at an event, the patron should, if possible, immediately check personally or call the appropriate conference facility.

M. Patrons Parking:

The NIH does not provide parking for NIH conference facilities. Limited parking is available for NIH employees and visitors.

At the NIH off-campus leased facilities, parking is available at a charge. Ask about the cost of parking at the time when making a reservation.

The patrons are strongly encouraged to use public transportation. The meeting planners are responsible for informing prospective meeting attendees that parking at NIH is limited.

Refer to paper copy for appendix information.

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