CHOOSING A VENUE

Volunteers are responsible for identifying and selecting venues for events. Be creative when selecting a location for your event. Think about neighborhood, parking, and public transportation options when selecting a venue. Consider using a location that is not typically accessible to the general public. People enjoy going somewhere they have not been before or where they normally would not have access on their own. Check to see if any of your members belong to private clubs or have access to distinctive facilities.

The best venues are centrally located, have ample free or inexpensive parking nearby, and are easily accessible by public transportation. If applicable, determine the venue’s available services (e.g., podium, microphone, projector, wireless access, preferred or restricted catering vendors) and inquire about fees for their use.

Keep track of suitable interesting venues for future use. Some clubs/groups keep a running list of previous or prospective venue options. If you are in an area with a regional club/group contact, we encourage you to reach out directly for additional support and local insight.

Details to inquire about when choosing a venue (as appropriate):

- Number of people the facility can accommodate
- Appropriateness of layout for the type of event (e.g., dining area big enough for a sit-down meal, adequate circulation space for a reception, space for chairs for a speaker event)
- Bad weather plan/alternate location and cancellation procedure
- Rental fee and deposit; always negotiate, some spaces may be donated
- Hours the facility is available (including set up and clean up)
- Responsibility for set up and clean up
- Adequate area available for registration table and chairs
- Flowers/decorations
- Adequate parking (self or valet) and charge
- Security and the cost
- Coat check and the cost
- Availability of audiovisual equipment, podium and microphone, piano, dance floor, etc., and the cost for equipment use
- Special requirements or restrictions, especially regarding food/beverages
- Special fees or additional charges (including tips and taxes)
- Inquire if they have liquor license and insurance
- Location and accessibility of bathrooms
- Location of handicap access and special needs accommodations

SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS

- For some locations other than hotels, clubs, and restaurants, you may need to bring in equipment such as tables, chairs, canopies, and garbage cans, as well as arrange for catering, sound equipment, set up and clean up. Check to see what equipment and services the facility provides and what your group will need to provide.
- Be certain to determine all costs involved when using any facility, and ask for written confirmation of all agreements.
- If the event involves a speaker or speaking program, ensure that the room is private and away from outside noise.