



# Commonwealth of Virginia

GENERAL ASSEMBLY

RICHMOND

## **Delegation of Authority for Interim Rules for the Virginia State Capitol by the General Assembly's Joint Committee on Rules to the Clerks of the House and Senate**

The Clerk of the Virginia House of Delegates and the Clerk of the Senate of Virginia are directed, in consultation with the Department of General Services and the Division of Capitol Police, to enact such interim rules for the historic State Capitol in Richmond as they may determine are prudent to: facilitate the business of the House and the Senate; preserve the Capitol, its architecture, artwork and furnishings; ensure that the Capitol remains available to welcome all visitors; and, ensure the safety of persons and property in the Capitol. Interim rules established jointly by the Clerk of the House and the Clerk of the Senate shall be effective immediately and shall remain in effect until such time as they are modified or rescinded by the clerks or by the Committee on Joint Rules.

*Approved January 6, 2012*

### **Virginia State Capitol Building Rules**

The Virginia Capitol, one of the most historic structures in the Western Hemisphere, every year welcomes thousands of Virginia citizens and visitors from around the country and throughout the world. Designed by Thomas Jefferson, the Virginia Capitol is the first public building in the New World designed as a monumental classical temple. A structure of unique historical interest, and the home to many irreplaceable works of art, the Virginia Capitol appears on the National Register of Historic Places and is one of only 14 sites on the 2008 United States World Heritage Tentative List, making it a candidate to become a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

The Virginia Capitol is unique among historic sites because it also is a working government building. The Virginia General Assembly, America's oldest English-speaking representative assembly, has been meeting at the Capitol in Richmond since 1788. It is important to respect and safeguard the historic nature of the Capitol as well as preserve the public's access to their government without impeding the day-to-day operations of state government and the conduct of the people's business.

In accordance with local, state, and federal laws, rules, and regulations, the following interim rules have been established jointly by the Clerk of the House and the Clerk of the Senate at the direction of the General Assembly's Committee on Joint Rules:

- The Virginia Capitol is open to the public during regular operating hours, as defined by the General Assembly. No person shall enter or remain in the State Capitol building other than during normal operating hours, unless properly authorized to do so.
- Possession or use of any device that may disrupt the conduct of business is prohibited, including but not limited to: voice-amplification equipment; bullhorns; blow horns; sirens, or other noise-producing devices; as well as signs on sticks, poles or stakes; or helium-filled balloons.
- No item may be affixed to monuments, railings, historic fixtures or surfaces. Use of stickers, labels, tape, screws, nails, balloons, sticks, poles or any other display technique for any purpose, may only occur with prior written authorization to do so from the Clerks of the House and Senate, in specifically identified locations.

These rules will be enforced fairly and impartially not only to ensure the participation and enjoyment of citizens and visitors to the Virginia Capitol but also guarantee that the legislative and executive branch officials

working herein for the public and entire Commonwealth are able to perform their duties and responsibilities.

All violators are subject to removal.

*Adopted January 9, 2012*

### **Senate Gallery / Mezzanine Rules**

1. Visitors must be quiet at all times and respect the decorum of the Senate Chamber.
2. You must remain seated at all times unless otherwise directed by an authorized official.
3. No leaning over the balcony or placing objects on ledges.
4. No firearms or weapons are allowed.
5. No signs may be displayed.
6. Food and beverages are not allowed.
7. Smoking is not allowed in the Gallery
8. Audible electronic devices must be turned off.
9. No flash photography is allowed in the Senate Chamber or Gallery.
10. Any violation of these rules may lead to dismissal from the Gallery / Mezzanine or confiscation of items.
11. These rules are subject to changes by the Senate at any time and without prior notice.

*All violators are subject to removal.*