

Manatee County Tax Collector's Facility Usage Policy

The Manatee County Tax Collector acknowledges and supports every person's First Amendment right to engage in speech activity, including the right to picket, distribute literature, and solicit.

The Manatee County Tax Collector acknowledges that certain public property, including public streets and sidewalks, are traditionally public forums where there exists the right to engage in First Amendment speech activity.

The Manatee County Tax Collector further acknowledges that its sole purpose is to collect the appropriate taxes and manage the funds obtained from the people of Manatee County.

The Manatee County Tax Collector acknowledges that its facilities are used solely for this business purpose and that its offices are not typically used as a forum for the free exchange of ideas.

The Manatee County Tax Collector acknowledges that certain speech activity, such as the solicitation of signatures, picketing or the distribution of literature may hinder access to the facility by the general public and further result in the disruption of the Manatee County Tax Collector's business purpose.

In consideration of the above acknowledgements, the Manatee County Tax Collector must adopt reasonable time, place and manner restrictions to:

- (1) Protect the County grounds and facilities;
- (2) Protect the health, safety and welfare of those persons conducting business with or visiting the Manatee County Tax Collector's Office, as well as those persons exercising their First Amendment rights on the grounds;
- (3) Ensure unobstructed and safe access to customers, visitors and employees to and from the driveways and parking spaces and from these areas to the building; and
- (4) Ensure unobstructed and safe ingress and egress to, within and from the building by customers, visitors and employees.

Therefore, in further consideration of the above acknowledgements and to ensure the safe access of all persons, the following policy is hereby adopted:

- (1) Picketing, distribution of literature, petitions or similar activities inside the building, under its canopies, adjacent to its doorways, or on its paved, concrete or landscaped areas is prohibited unless otherwise provided herein.
- (2) Solicitation of any kind, including the solicitation of petition signatures, is prohibited unless otherwise provided herein.

- (3) Solicitation to sell products or services of any kind on the property is prohibited.
- (4) Solicitation of donations or money of any kind on the property is prohibited.
- (5) No signs, posters, balloon, or similar items may be affixed to the building or any of its structures, including but not limited to, power/light poles, signage or grounds, unless such item is solely utilized for the operation and maintenance of the property and is authorized by the Manatee County Tax Collector's Office.
- (6) The parking of any vehicle or item engaging in advertising of any kind, including the sale of the vehicle or item, is prohibited.
- (7) Overnight parking of vehicles on the property is prohibited, except for those owned by a governmental entity or its employees.

In the interest of accommodating persons who wish to engage in picketing, the distribution of literature, the solicitation of petition signatures and other similar activities (hereinafter "Speech Activity") on or about the offices of the Manatee County Tax Collector, the Manatee County Tax Collector hereby creates and designates a "First Amendment Zone" whereby persons may engage in speech activity within certain parameters.

The First Amendment Zone is located on the eastern side of the Manatee County Tax Collector office located at 819 301 Blvd. W. Bradenton, Florida. The First Amendment Zone is a grassy area bordered by sidewalks adjacent to the east parking lot. The First Amendment Zone does not include any of the parking lots or the actual sidewalks. No Speech Activity shall exceed beyond the designated zone. Should you have questions regarding the exact location of the First Amendment Zone, please view the map (exhibit A) or contact the Manatee Tax Collector at 941.741.4821.

The following guidelines apply to those who wish to use the First Amendment Zone for Speech Activity:

- (1). The First Amendment Zone is available on a first come first serve basis each day. Tables or equipment may not be set up prior to the Tax Collector Office's opening business hour each day.
- (2) Any person(s) performing any Speech Activity within the First Amendment Zone may provide and utilize tables. No table may exceed 48 inches. A maximum of 2 tables, with a minimum of one person stationed at each table at all times, shall be permitted within the designated area. If the maximum number of tables is reached, in the interests of preserving order and safety, the Manatee County Tax Collector reserves the right to turn additional person(s) who wish to engage in Speech Activity that day away unless or until a space is vacated. If utilized, the table and any seating shall be placed as demonstrated on Exhibit A. No equipment of any kind will be supplied by the Manatee County Tax Collector's Office.

- (3) All signage must be attached to or placed on the table or be hand-held.
- (4) Bullhorns, sound systems, radios, musical instruments or other audio devices are disruptive and are therefore prohibited.
- (5) No persons connected with the Speech Activity may solicit the public for any reason except from within the First Amendment Zone.
- (6) In the interests of safety, all supplies, personal belongings and any other items shall be placed on and/or under each table. Nothing shall be placed on the lawn or landscaped area. Tables, supplies, personal belongings and all other items shall not be left unattended at any time and shall be removed in their entirety no later than the Manatee County Tax Collector Office's close of business each day.
- (7) Persons performing any of the aforesaid Speech Activity shall not in any way represent themselves, organizations or issues to be affiliated with the Manatee County Tax Collector's Office, or any other governmental, charitable or non-profit organization or entity unless such is the fact.
- (8) Pedestrians must be able to use the sidewalk at all times without being impeded.

Because of the limited space available at the other Manatee Tax Collector office locations, all Speech Activity will be directed to the First Amendment Zone located at the 819 301 Blvd. W. Bradenton location.

All persons who chose to engage in Speech Activity shall do so in accordance with this Policy. The interpretation and implementation of the above policy shall be at the sole discretion of the Manatee County Tax Collector. The Manatee County Tax Collector reserves the right to contact the appropriate authorities should any persons engage in activity that is in violation of the above policy and to further require such persons and/or property be removed from the premises. It is recommended that first-time users of the property contact the Manatee County Tax Collector's Office to obtain a copy of this policy or visit our website at www.taxcollector.com. If you should have any questions regarding the above policy, please contact the Manatee Tax Collector at 941.741.4821.

Revised: Location revised June 2012.

EXHIBIT A

-  Entrance/Exit
-  First Amendment Zone

