

Building Use Policy

The Chicago Theological Seminary building at 1407 E. 60th street is like a second home to many in the CTS community. The proper upkeep and adherence to fire safety protocols are critical to maintaining safety and the use of the CTS building for years to come. This Building Use Policy includes the most critical and common rules that must be followed by all people utilizing the building at all times.

Small Electrical Appliances and Equipment

A small appliance is a portable or semi-portable machine, generally used on table-tops, counter-tops, or other platforms, to accomplish a household task. Examples include the following: hot plates, microwave ovens, toaster ovens, toasters, fans, lamps, electric kettles, coffeemakers, lamps, and humidifiers.

All appliances allowed for use and utilized in office breakrooms or kitchenettes must carry a commercial use listing. Toaster ovens, toasters, microwaves, coffeemakers and hot plates are prohibited in offices. These devices are only allowed in kitchen areas.

Appliances must be plugged directly into an outlet and be designated as approved with a nationally recognized testing laboratory mark. Appliances must be grounded “three prong” or be clearly labeled as “double insulated”. The case or body of the item cannot be cracked, chipped, broken, and there must be no exposed metal parts or electrical shock hazards. All appliances must be located in an appropriate place for use without causing a tripping hazard or obstructing egress pathways or emergency safety devices.

If more than two appliances with a cumulative wattage of more than 1,500 watts are plugged into a single wall outlet, a power strip designated as approved with a nationally recognized testing laboratory mark with a built-in circuit breaker must be used. Both the cord and plug must be undamaged (i.e., cord not taped or covered, plug intact and without conductors showing, no cracks or breaks in cord or plug). Countertop appliances should be unplugged when not in use.

Space Heaters

Space heaters with electrical heating elements that glow red-hot and fuel powered (e.g., kerosene, propane) are **prohibited in the building**.

Electric space heaters with water/oil fluid enclosed heating elements or ceramic covered heating elements which provide radiant heat are allowed for use at CTS if the following guidelines are followed:

- Space heaters cannot be operated within three feet of combustible materials including waste baskets, furniture, coat racks, or draperies;
- Items with an ignition source, including space heaters, must not be placed in areas where flammable or explosive vapors may be potentially found
- Space heaters must not exceed 110 volts and must not be rated for more than 1,500 watts; 1,500 watt space heaters must be plugged into an electrical outlet that is rated for 20 amps or greater;
- Space heaters must be designated as approved with a nationally recognized testing laboratory mark;
- Space heaters must have a thermostat that shuts off when a certain temperature is reached which means heaters without thermostats (i.e., simple “on/off” or “high/low”) are **not permitted**;
- Space heaters must have functional tip over protection (i.e., space heater must turn off automatically if tipped over);
- Space heaters must have overheat protection (i.e., space heater will automatically shut the unit off if there is an overheat situation);

- Space heater may only be located on the floor. It is prohibited to place the space heater on file cabinets, desks, or tables;
- Space heaters must plug directly into an electrical outlet. **It is prohibited to plug the space heater into an extension cord or power strip;**
- Space heaters must not be located in high traffic areas or used in dusty environments (e.g., workshops);
- Space heaters must always be turned off and unplugged when not in use; and
- Space heaters must not be left running unattended.
- The Facilities Department reserves the right to inspect and declare any space heater “unapproved.”

Extension Cords and Power Strips

- Extension cords and power strips must be inspected for damage to the outer insulation prior to use. If damage extends beyond the outer layer of cord (i.e., if the conductor is exposed), then the extension cord must be discarded.
- Extension cords and power strips must be plugged into a wall outlet and may not be plugged into another extension cord or power strip. **Extension cords may never be used in place of permanent wiring and may only be used for a temporary period of up to 90 days.** Extension cords must be unplugged when not in use.
- Extension cords and power strips that have a ground pin may only be plugged into grounded outlets. Devices that have a ground pin may only be plugged into extension cords and power strips that accept ground pins. Do not remove the ground pin from the plug of the device or the extension cord or power strip.
- Extension cords and power strips must be designated as approved with a nationally recognized testing laboratory mark (UL) and used within the manufacturer’s guidelines.

Use of Open Flame Devices

The use of open flame devices inside the CTS building are prohibited in all spaces except the Clark or Skyline chapel, the Dining Hall and kitchen.

Candles

In designated areas, shorter taper or battery powered candles are preferable. In designated areas where candles/open flame devices are used, the following precautions must be taken:

- Designate a person responsible for lighting, monitoring and extinguishing candles.
- Extinguish candles as soon as possible once the program or service has completed.
- Keep candles away from items that can catch fire, such as clothes, curtains, books and tablecloths/other fabrics.
- Use candleholders that are sturdy, won’t tip over easily, are made from a material that cannot burn and are large enough to collect dripping wax.
- Keep candles free of foreign materials, such as matches and wick clippings.
- Burn candles on a steady, uncluttered, heat-resistant surfaces. Remember candles can become hot enough to damage furniture.
- Never leave a candle burning in an unoccupied room.
- Never let candles burn for more than four hours at a time

- Avoid carrying or holding candles, and let them cool sufficiently before moving
- Keep wicks trimmed to one-quarter inch and extinguish them when they get to within two inches of the holder.

Kitchen

Kitchen equipment fueled by small heat sources that can be readily extinguished by water, such as solid alcohol burning devices (e.g., Sterno gel fuel) is allowed in public spaces, provided that the devices are attended to while a flame is present. The use of solid alcohol burning devices is prohibited in non-approved areas such as offices or classrooms. An individual from the sponsoring department, or their authorized designee, must conduct a post-event check to ensure all fire sources are extinguished and that the space is returned to its previous state. Caterers are able to use CTS' hot box or bring their own to heat food. Use of the kitchen ovens and stoves is strictly prohibited.

Smoking

All Seminary personnel are required to follow Illinois state law with regard to smoking in public places. The law states, "Smoking in public places, places of employment, and governmental vehicles is prohibited. No person must smoke in a public place or in any place of employment or within 15 feet of any entrance to a public place or place of employment." Therefore, smoking in CTS classrooms, offices, or other indoor spaces is prohibited, as is smoking within 15 feet of entrances, exits, windows that open, and ventilation intakes that serve an enclosed area where smoking is prohibited.

Storage/Items in Corridors

Corridors, exits stairs, and fire escapes are typically the primary escape routes in an emergency. Storage in corridors, exits, stairs, and fire escapes is **strictly prohibited**. This includes, but is not limited to temporary, short-term or long-term storage or spill over from offices, classrooms, or from shipping and receiving areas. No storage is allowed in any corridor with the exception of recessed vestibule areas and no storage is allowed in or under any stairwell.

No items are allowed to block or cover emergency safety equipment such as fire alarm panels, pull stations, stairs, detectors, hoses, extinguishers, exit signage, exit paths, etc. Fire protection system controls, and heating, ventilation and air-conditioning (HVAC) system controls must be accessible to the Fire Department therefore prohibiting excessive storage in mechanical rooms. There is to be no storage of any material inside electrical rooms. All combustible storage is prohibited in mechanical and electrical rooms unless approved by The University of Chicago.

Fire Doors and Emergency Exits

Fire doors are doors with a fire-resistance rating used to reduce the spread of fire and smoke between sections of floors, enabling the safe evacuation of the building. The office suite doors on the 1st and 2nd floor contain self-closing fire doors which can be maintained in an open position and will close automatically during fire alarms. It is **prohibited, at any time**, to block, prop, or wedge a fire door in the open position, or prevent the self-closing of a fire door. Designated emergency exit doors are to be readily opened from the inside at all times, and must not be, at any time, locked, chained, blocked, or barred to prevent exiting.

Firearms

Chicago Theological Seminary prohibits all persons who enter Seminary property from carrying a handgun, firearm, knives with a blade larger than that of a folding pocket knife, chemical, explosive, or detonating device or other weapon of any kind, regardless of whether the person is licensed to carry the weapon. Pursuant to 430 ILCS 66/65, a State of Illinois concealed carry licensee must not knowingly carry a firearm on or into a higher education campus building. The only exception to this policy will be police officers, security guards, or other persons who have been given written consent by CTS to carry a weapon, and individuals who are required to carry a weapon pursuant to state law.

Decorations in the building

Decorations of all types must be either non-combustible or adequately treated to render them fire resistant. All lighting and other electrical equipment must be UL listed and in good working condition. No items are to be hung from the ceiling in corridors. Exit signs, emergency lighting, extinguishers and sprinkler heads must remain visible and accessible. Candles may not be used as decoration; for further rules regarding candles, review the "Use of Open Flame Devices" section above.

Paper Shredders

Paper shredders can pose a fire hazard if paper jams occur while operating the unit which leads to overheating of the machine. All paper shredders must be equipped with thermal protection and an automatic shut-off. Shredder waste paper bins must be emptied regularly to ensure no excessive amounts of shredded paper accumulate. Additional bins for paper shredding can be found in the basement.