



## **Belle Isle Aquarium Private Event Rental FAQ**

### **What kinds of events can I host at the Belle Isle Aquarium?**

The BIA is a perfectly unique venue for hosting any special event including cocktail receptions, ceremonies, lectures or presentations, and luncheons. We encourage you to visit the facility during hours of operation to determine how good of a fit the space is for your special event.

### **What days are available for rentals?**

Private events can be booked at the BIA anytime the facility is NOT operating. The facility is open to the public Friday-Sunday from 10am-4pm, and hosts school field trips Tuesday-Thursday from 9am-4pm during the months of January-May. The earliest a private event can be booked on those days is 4:30pm.

### **Does the BIA have any blackout dates for private rentals?**

Yes. The BIA is not available for rentals between May 19, 2019 – June 9, 2019, as well as major holidays.

### **What is the capacity for private events?**

Capacity varies based on the style of the event. Cocktail receptions or strolling dinners can accommodate up to 250 people.

### **How much does it cost to rent the BIA for a private event?**

The rental rate for the BIA is \$100/hr, minimum 4 hours.

### **How much time is included in a private rental include?**

Private rentals require a minimum rental of 4 hours, and can be booked for up to a maximum of 8 hours. This includes time to set up and clean up your event. You may book one additional hour at the rate of \$150/hr in the case that you need additional time to tear down your event.

### **Is there a fee to enter Belle Isle?**

Yes. A State of Michigan Recreation Passport is required to enter the island. It is \$11 annually and can be purchased at [http://www.michigan.gov/dnr/0,4570,7-153-10365\\_55798---,00.html](http://www.michigan.gov/dnr/0,4570,7-153-10365_55798---,00.html). This requirement cannot be waived for events taking place on the island.

### **Is my event approved when I submit my application?**

No. Submitting an application does not guarantee approval of your event. Once received, your application will be reviewed by staff who will then determine whether or not your event can be hosted at the facility. The scale and scope of the event, as well as the desired dates are among factors for approval or denial of an event.

### **Am I allowed to prepare my own food?**

You may provide homemade or store-bought food and beverages for your guests, or a caterer may be contracted who is licensed and insured in the State of Michigan.

### **Am I required to contract with your list of recommended vendors?**

No, however, any caterer or bar service provider must provide the proper licensing documentation in order to service your event. For events with using the outdoor space, vendors from the MDNR Approved Vendors list must be contracted.

**Is there a kitchen on site?**

No, there is not a kitchen or prep area available. However, there is a multipurpose room where the catering can be staged.

**Am I allowed to serve alcohol?**

Yes, alcohol may be served at your private (free of charge to guests) event. However, either a liquor license or a host liquor liability policy is required. See BIA Event Rental Info for more information. Alcohol may not be on the premises or consumed without prior permission.

**Am I allowed to sell alcohol at my event?**

The allowance of direct or indirect liquor sales is strictly limited to 501©3 non-profit organizations. Such organizations must obtain a one-day special license from the Michigan Liquor Control Commission if they intend to sell alcohol to guests. Private and corporate events may serve alcohol to event guests only if there is no charge for guests to attend the event.

**Are there tables and chairs on site to use at my event?**

Currently, the BIA does not offer a full menu of furniture as a rental amenity. However, we have a number of cocktail tables and a small selection of other items that are available to add on to your rental. Please reference the BIA Event Rental Info for a list of those items.

**Is parking available for my guests?**

Yes. The BIA has a parking lot that can accommodate approximately 100 cars. Parking is accommodated on a first come first serve basis and cannot be reserved based on the public nature of the park.

**Can I book live entertainment?**

You may book live entertainment, however, special caution needs to be taken with the facility's capacity for electrical wattage. Please inquire with the BIC event manager.

**Is there a sound system available to play background music?**

Yes, there is a portable PA system available for rent that can play music from an iPod or mp3 player.

**Is there someone at the BIA to help me plan my event?**

We do not offer event planning services. When you book your event, you are granted a complementary appointment with the BIC event manager to discuss any concerns about your event. Additional appointments can be booked for \$30/hr. Feel free to plan on your own or to hire a party planner.

**Can I sell tickets to my event?**

Yes, you can sell tickets to your event. However, a disclaimer must be included in the advertisements for such events to communicate that the event is not hosted by the Belle Isle Conservancy. Also, serving alcohol is only permitted at a ticketed event with a one-day liquor license issued to non-profit organizations by the MLCC. Please contact us at [biarentals@belleisleconservancy.org](mailto:biarentals@belleisleconservancy.org) for additional information.

**Can my guests come in before the contracted event time?**

No. There is no offsite area where guests are able to wait ahead of your event start time. We ask that you make sure to not give access to guests before your event is set to begin

**I'd like to book the Anna Scripps Whitcomb Conservatory and the Belle Isle Aquarium for the same date.**

**Can I use the same application?**

No. The Belle Isle Aquarium is managed and operated by the Belle Isle Conservancy. The Anna Scripps Whitcomb Conservatory (ASWC) is managed and operated by the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR). To inquire about the availability of the ASWC, please contact the MDNR at [DNR-belleisleparkevents@michigan.gov](mailto:DNR-belleisleparkevents@michigan.gov).