



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Superintendent's Compendium
Of Designations, Closures, Permit
Requirements and Other
Restrictions Imposed Under
Discretionary Authority.

New Bedford Whaling
National Historical Park

33 William Street
New Bedford, MA 02740

508-996-4095 phone

Approved:

"Signature on File" Date: 01/12/2026
Janine da Silva, Acting Superintendent

A. INTRODUCTION

1. Superintendent's Compendium Described

The Superintendent's Compendium is a summary of park-specific rules implemented under Title 36 of the Code of Federal Regulations (36 CFR). It serves as public notice, identifies areas closed for public use, provides a list of activities requiring either a special use permit or reservation, and elaborates on public use and resource protection regulations pertaining specifically to the administration of the park. The Superintendent's Compendium does not repeat regulations found in 36 CFR or other Titles of the United States Code and Code of Federal Regulations, which are enforced without further elaboration at the park level.

The regulations contained in 36 CFR, Parts 1-7, are the basic mechanism used by the National Park Service (NPS) to preserve and protect the natural and cultural resources of the park and to protect visitors and property within the park. Parts 1 through 6 are general regulations applicable to all areas of the National Park System, and Part 7 contains special regulations specific to individual parks. Each of these Parts has many sections and subsections articulating specific provisions. Within some of these Part 1-7 sections and subsections, the Superintendent is granted discretionary authority to develop local rules to be responsive to the needs of a specific park resource or activity, park plan, program, and/or special needs of the general public.

As an example, 36 CFR § 1.5(a), *Closures and Public Use Limits* provides the Superintendent certain discretion in allowing or disallowing certain activities. The authority granted by the Section, however, requires the Superintendent to comply with the Administrative Procedures Act (5 USC Section 551), which requires public notice on actions with major impact on visitor use patterns, park resources or those that are highly controversial in nature.

Another example is 36 CFR § 1.6, *Permits*, which allows the Superintendent to require a permit for certain uses and activities in the park. This Section, however, requires that a list of activities needing a permit (and a fee schedule for the various types of permits) be maintained by the park.

A final example is 36 CFR § 2.1(c)(1), *Preservation of Natural, Cultural and Archeological Resources*, which provides the Superintendent the authority to designate certain fruits, nuts, berries or unoccupied seashells which may be gathered by hand for personal use or

consumption. This activity can occur, however, only if a written determination shows that the allowed activity does not adversely affect park wildlife, the reproductive potential of a plant species, or otherwise adversely affect park resources.

This Compendium should be used in conjunction with Title 36 of the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), Parts 1-7, to more fully understand the regulations governing the use and enjoyment of all areas of the National Park System.

A copy of [Title 36, CFR](https://bookstore.gpo.gov/catalog/cfr-title-36-parks-forests-public-property), can be purchased from the U.S. Government Printing Office at: <https://bookstore.gpo.gov/catalog/cfr-title-36-parks-forests-public-property>

OR

Superintendent of Documents
P.O. Box 371954
Pittsburgh, PA 15250-7954

The CFR is also available on the Internet at: ecfr.gov.

2. Laws and Policies Allowing the Superintendent to Develop This Compendium

The National Park Service (NPS) is granted broad statutory authority under Title 54 of the United States Code (U.S.C.) § 100101(a) (formerly 16 U.S.C. § 1a-1, "Organic Act") to:

"...regulate the use of the National Park System by means and measures that conform to the fundamental purpose of the System units, which purpose is to conserve the scenery, natural and historic objects, and wild life in the System units and to provide for the enjoyment of the scenery, natural and historic objects, and wild life in such manner and by such means as will leave them unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations."

In addition, 54 U.S.C. § 100751(a) allows the NPS, through the Secretary of the Interior, to:

"prescribe such regulations as the Secretary considers necessary or proper for the use and management of System units."

In 1970, Congress amended the NPS Organic Act to clarify its intentions as to the overall mission of the NPS. Through the General Authorities Act of 1970, Congress brought all areas administered by the NPS into one National Park System and directed the NPS to manage all areas under its administration consistent with the Organic Act of 1916.

In 1978, Congress amended the General Authorities Act of 1970 and reasserted a System-wide high standard of protection as defined in the original Organic Act by stating:

"Congress further reaffirms, declares, and directs that the promotion and regulation of the various areas of the National Park System, as defined by Section 1 of this Title, shall be consistent with and founded in the purpose established by Section 1 of this Title, to the common benefit of all people of the United States."

Additionally, 16 U.S.C. § 1c defines the National Park System as:

"...any areas of land and water now or hereafter administered by the Secretary of the Interior through the National Park Service for park, monument, historic, parkway, recreational, or other purposes."

In addition to the above statutory authority, the Superintendent is guided by established NPS policy as found in the *NPS Management Policies* (2006). The Superintendent is also guided

by more specific policies promulgated by the Director, National Park Service, in the form of Director's Orders.

As stated in the Management Policies, the primary responsibility of the NPS is to protect and preserve our national natural and cultural resources while providing for the enjoyment of these resources by visitor and other users, as long as use does not impair specific park resources or overall visitor experience. The appropriateness of any particular visitor use or recreational experience is resource-based and will vary from park to park; therefore, a use or activity that is appropriate in one park area may not be appropriate in another.

The Superintendent is directed to analyze overall park use and determine if any particular use is appropriate. Where conflict arises between use and resource protection, where the Superintendent has a reasonable basis to believe a resource is or would become impaired, then that Superintendent is obliged to place limitations on public use.

3. Consistency of This Compendium with Applicable Federal Law and Requirements

The Superintendent's Compendium is not considered a significant rule requiring review by the Office of Management and Budget under Executive Order 12866. In addition, this Compendium will not have a significant economic effect on a number of small entities nor impose a significant cost on any local, state or tribal government or private organization, and therefore does not fall under the requirements of either the Regulatory Flexibility Act or the Unfunded Mandates Reform Act.

4. Development of the Requirements of the Superintendent's Compendium

As outlined above, the NPS has broad authority and responsibility to determine what types of uses and activities are appropriate in any particular National Park System area. The requirements of the Superintendent's Compendium are developed through an analysis and determination process. The decision criteria used during this process are:

- Is there use or activity consistent with the NPS Organic Act and NPS policy?
- Is the use or activity consistent and compatible with the park's enabling legislation, management objectives, and corresponding management plans?
- Will the use or activity damage the park's protected natural and cultural resources and other protected values?
- Will the use or activity disturb or be in conflict with wildlife, vegetation, and environmental protection actions and values?
- Will the use or activity conflict with or be incompatible with traditional park uses and activities?
- Will the use or activity compromise employee or public safety?

5. Applicability of the Compendium

The rules contained in this Compendium apply to all persons entering, using, visiting or otherwise present on Federally owned lands, including submerged lands, and waters administered by the NPS within the legislative boundaries of the park. This includes all waters subject to the jurisdiction of the United States, including all navigable waters.

6. Enforcement of Compendium Requirements

NPS Law Enforcement Park Rangers enforce the requirements of the United State Code, 36 CFR, and this Superintendent's Compendium.

7. Penalties for Not Adhering to the Compendium Requirements

A person who violates any provision of the regulations found in 36 CFR, Parts 1-7, or provisions of this Compendium, is subject to a fine as provided by law (18 U.S.C. 3571) up to \$5,000 for individuals and \$10,000 for organizations, or by imprisonment not exceeding six months (18 U.S.C. 3559), or both, and shall be adjudged to pay all court costs associated with any court proceedings. You may receive a list of fines associated with any particular provision by contacting the Administrative Officer at New Bedford Whaling National Historical Park, 33 William Street. New Bedford, MA 02740.

8. Comments on the Compendium

The Compendium is reviewed annually and revised as necessary. The park welcomes comments about its program and activities at any time.

Written comments on the Compendium may be submitted to:

Superintendent
New Bedford Whaling
National Historical Park
33 William Street
New Bedford, MA 02740

9. Effective Date of the Superintendent Compendium

The Superintendent's Compendium is effective on the approval date listed on the first page of this document and remains in effect until revised for a period up to one year.

10. Additional Information

Some of the terms used in this Compendium may have specific meaning defined in 36 CFR 1.4 *Definitions*.

11. Availability

Copies of the Compendium are available at New Bedford Whaling National Historical Park 33 William Street New Bedford, MA 02740. It may also be found at nps.gov/nebe/learn/management/compendium.

B. SUPERINTENDENT'S COMPENDIUM

In accordance with applicable law and policy, and pursuant to the delegated authorities provided in Title 36, Code of Federal Regulations, Chapter 1 ("36 CFR"), the following compendium actions apply to all lands and waters administered by the National Park Service (NPS) within the boundaries of New Bedford Whaling National Historical Park. This document is the written compilation of designations, closures, permit requirements and other restrictions imposed under the discretionary authority of the Superintendent, as required by 36 CFR 1.7(b). Violating any provision in this Compendium may result in criminal penalties under 36 CFR 1.3.

The compendium actions in this document apply in addition to all other laws that apply to the lands and waters administered by the NPS within the boundaries of New Bedford Whaling National Historical Park. These include:

- Regulations in 36 CFR and other CFR titles such as Title 43, which contains regulations that apply on public lands administered by the Department of the Interior. The current version of the CFR can be found www.ecfr.gov. Click on “Title 36” and then “Chapter 1” to access 36 CFR.
- Status codified in U.S. Code, in particular provisions in Titles 16 and 54.

This Compendium is organized by the sections in 36 CFR that give the Superintendent discretionary authority to take the compendium action. Written determinations that explain why each compendium action is necessary appear in this document in *italicized* print.

Please contact Superintendent’s Office if you have any questions or comments about the Superintendent’s Compendium.

C. DEFINITIONS

National Park Service regulations in 36 CFR 1.4 define certain terms that are used in 36 CFR. Other sections in 36 CFR may define terms that are used in those sections. To the extent any terms defined in the CFR are used in this Compendium, those definitions apply. In addition to terms defined in the CFR, the following terms used in this Compendium are defined as follows:

Boundary: means the limits of lands or waters administered by the National Park Service as specified by Congress, or denoted by presidential proclamation, or recorded in the records of a state or political subdivision in accordance with applicable law, or published pursuant to law, or otherwise published or posted by the National Park Service.

Corson Building: Building located at 27 William St. That hosts park’s theater, elevator and exhibit space, as well as leased commercial space.

Demonstrations: The term “demonstrations” includes demonstrations, picketing, speechmaking, marching, holding vigils or religious services, and all other like forms of conduct that involve the communication or expression of views or grievances, engaged in by one or more persons, the conduct of which is reasonably likely to attract a crowd or onlookers. This term does not include casual park use by visitors or tourists that is not reasonably likely to attract a crowd or onlookers.

Electronic Nicotine Delivery System: Electronic Nicotine Delivery Systems (ENDS) such as e-cigarettes, vape pens, and similar devices, regardless of the substance being consumed

Link Building: Building connecting 33 William and 27 William St. Area includes stairs/ramp leading to restrooms and theater within Corson Building.

National Park System (Park area): means any area of land and water now or hereafter administered by the Secretary of the Interior through the National Park Service for park, monument, historic, parkway, recreational, or other purposes.

Permit: means a written authorization to engage in uses or activities that are otherwise prohibited, restricted, or regulated.

Public Use Limit: means the number of persons; number and type of animals; amount, size and type of equipment, vessels, mechanical modes of conveyance, or food/beverage containers allowed to enter, be brought into, remain in, or be used within a designated geographic area or facility; or the length of time a designated geographic area or facility may be occupied.

Refuse: means trash, garbage, rubbish, waste papers, bottles or cans, debris, litter, oil, solvents, liquid waste, or other discarded materials.

Service Animal: means any dog or miniature horse that is individually trained to do work or perform tasks for the benefit of an individual with a disability, including a physical, sensory, psychiatric, intellectual, or other mental disability.

Uncrewed Aircraft: means a device that is used or intended to be used for flight without the possibility of direct human intervention from within or on the device, and the associated operational elements and components that are required for the pilot or system operator in command to operate or control the device (such as cameras, sensors, communication links). This term includes all types of devices that meet this definition (e.g., model airplanes, quadcopters, and drones) that are used for any purpose, including for recreation or commerce.

Visitor Center: Building located at 33 William St. that hosts of exhibit space and park store.

Walkway: means sidewalks, paths, trails, or hard-surfaced areas that are closed to the use of bicycles and motorized vehicles.

36 CFR Part 1 - General Provisions

36 CFR § 1.5 Closures and Public Use Limits.

Pursuant to **36 CFR § 1.5**, and under the authority provided by 54 U.S.C. §§ 100101, 100751, and 320102, the Superintendent of New Bedford Whaling National Historical Park establishes the following visiting hours, public use limits, closures, and area designations for specific use or activity. These actions are necessary to ensure public safety, protect environmental and cultural resources, and provide for equitable use and high-quality visitor experiences.

(a)(1) Visiting Hours:

Pursuant to **36 CFR § 1.5(a)(1)**, visiting hours for park facilities are as follows:

- **Visitor Center:**
 - May 1 through November 30: Wednesday - Sunday, 9:00 AM - 5:00 PM
 - December 1 through April 30: Wednesday - Saturday, 9:00 AM - 5:00 PM
 - **Holiday Closures:** The Visitor Center will be closed to public visitation on:
 - New Year's Day
 - Thanksgiving Day
 - Christmas Day.
- **Visitor Center Garden:**
 - Open daily from dawn to dusk.
- **Temporary Closures:**
 - Severe weather or emergency situations may necessitate temporary closure of park facilities until conditions are safe.
 - The park may occasionally alter days and hours of operation, or may close the park, or portions thereof at any time for weather, emergency purposes, public health, construction, or security reasons to protect staff, visitors, and resources.

- The park, or portions thereof, may close at any time for emergency, public health, or security reasons to protect staff, visitors, and resources.
- Temporary closures will be announced via the park's website alert section, social media pages, phone greeting, and postings at key park locations.
- All permanent closures will be in accordance with the rulemaking procedures in the Federal Register.

Note: Operating hours for national park service owned facilities may differ from those of external organizations, businesses, and our other buildings located within the park boundaries.

Determination: *Establishing specific visiting hours and acknowledging holiday and temporary closures ensures safety, security, protection of park resources, and a quality visitor experience.*

(a)(1) Public Use Limits:

Pursuant to 36 CFR § 1.5(a)(1), the following public use limits have been established for visitor safety, resource protection, and quality visitor experiences:

- **Visitor Center:**
 - **Main Visitor Center Area:** Maximum occupancy of 30 persons
 - **Communities of Whaling Room:** Maximum occupancy of 20 persons
 - **Preservation Room/Gallery Space:** Maximum occupancy of 35 persons
 - **Link Area:** Maximum occupancy of 40 persons
- **Visitor Center Garden:**
 - **Standing Events:** Maximum occupancy of 60 persons
 - **Sitting Events:** Maximum occupancy of 30 persons
 - The Visitor Center accessibility ramp and adjacent landings on NPS-owned property must remain clear and unobstructed at all times. Sitting, standing, or placing personal belongings on or near the ramp is prohibited. This ensures ADA compliance and allows safe access for all visitors.
- **Corson Building:**
 - **Elevator:** Maximum occupancy of 6 persons
 - **Theater:** Maximum occupancy of 55 persons
 - **Makerspace (2nd Floor):**
 - **Standing Events:** Maximum occupancy of 200 persons
 - **Seating Events:** Maximum occupancy of 100 persons

- **Educational Use:** Maximum occupancy of 80 persons

Determination: *Public use limits and regulations are necessary to ensure visitor safety, protect sensitive historical and cultural resources from undue stress or damage, and maintain a high-quality visitor experience. The historic building interiors at New Bedford Whaling National Historical Park have limited space and narrow hallways; exceeding occupancy limits could threaten public safety and park resources. These measures are consistent with relevant federal, state, and local occupancy standards, including compliance with the ADA, and are supported by regular safety and resource impact assessments.*

(a)(1) Closures:

Pursuant to 36 CFR § 1.5(a)(1), the following areas are closed to public access:

- **Administrative offices and maintenance spaces are closed to the public.**
- **The visitor center driveway is closed for public use.**

Determination: *These closures are implemented to ensure public safety, protect sensitive equipment, secure government property, and maintain operational efficiency. Restricting access prevents unauthorized entry, minimizes safety hazards, and allows staff to perform duties without disruption.*

(a)(2) Conditions or Restrictions on a Use or Activity:

Pursuant to 36 CFR § 1.5(a)(2), the Superintendent may impose conditions on a use or activity to ensure visitor safety, protect park resources, maintain operational effectiveness, and implement management responsibilities. The following conditions apply to specified uses or activities within New Bedford Whaling National Historical Park:

Unmanned Aircraft (Drones) Prohibited

- Launching, landing, or operating an uncrewed or remotely piloted aircraft from or on lands and waters administered by the National Park Service within the boundaries of New Bedford Whaling National Historic Park is prohibited except as approved in writing by the superintendent.

Determination: *This restriction is necessary to prevent unacceptable impacts to park resources and values from the use of uncrewed aircraft. Potential impacts include harming visitors, interfering with rescue operations, causing excessive noise, impacting viewsheds, and disturbing wildlife. This restriction is required by NPS Reference Manual #60: Aviation Management, Chapter 12 – Uncrewed Aircraft Systems.*

Visitor Center Garden Use Conditions

Pursuant to 36 CFR § 1.5(a)(2), the following conditions apply to the Visitor Center Garden:

- No stakes, poles, or ground-penetrating objects are allowed.
- Use is weather-dependent and subject to resource protection needs.

Determination: *These guidelines prevent damage to infrastructure and ensure the garden remains clean and welcoming for all visitors.*

Restriction on Food and Drink

Pursuant to 36 CFR § 1.5(a)(2), food and drink are not permitted in the visitor center, link building and Corson Theater located in the Corson Building, except for water in a closed container.

Determination: This restriction protects audiovisual equipment, furnishings, and sanitation.

Filming, Still Photography, and Audio Recording

36 CFR 1.5§ (a)(2), Designate areas for a specific use or activity or impose conditions or restrictions on a use or activity.

- **Filming, still photography, and audio recording activity may require a permit, consistent with 54 U.S.C. 100905.**
 - Filming, still photography, and audio recording activity that occurs in closed areas, requires exclusive use of a site or area, or involves a set or staging equipment other than handheld equipment (such as a tripod, monopod, and handheld lighting equipment) requires a permit, unless the activity is affiliated with an activity or event that has been allowed under a written authorization, such as a special use permit.
 - Filming, still photography, and audio recording that involves more than eight individuals requires a permit, unless the NPS has specifically notified an individual or group that a permit is not required, or if the activity is affiliated with an activity or event that has been allowed under a written authorization, such as a special use permit.
 - If a permit is required for the reasons stated above, or if the NPS otherwise determines and then notifies an individual or group that a permit is required for a filming, still photography, or audio recording activity, then engaging in that activity without a permit is prohibited. Violating a term or condition of a permit issued by the NPS for a filming, still photography, or audio recording activity is prohibited, and may result in the suspension or revocation of the permit, in addition to any penalties that may apply under 36 CFR 1.3.

Federal law at 54 U.S.C. 100905 states that permits and fees are not required for filming, still photography, or audio recording in park areas if certain requirements are met. These requirements address various topics, including, but not limited to, group size, location, equipment, potential impacts to resources and visitors, and the likelihood that the NPS will incur related administrative costs. If any of these requirements are not met, the law allows the Secretary of the Interior, acting through the NPS, to require a permit for the subject activity. Permit requirements are imposed by the superintendent under discretionary authority provided by 36 CFR 1.5(a)(2), which allows the superintendent to impose conditions or restrictions on a use or activity, consistent with applicable legislation, to implement management responsibilities. The general regulations for permits in 36 CFR 1.6 do not apply to permits issued for filming, still photography, and audio recording, which instead are governed by the statutory provisions in 54 U.S.C. 100905. The imposition of permit requirements, on a case-by-case basis, for filming, still photography, or audio recording does not require rulemaking under 36 CFR 1.5(b). Requiring a permit with reasonable terms and conditions in accordance with statutory requirements at 54 U.S.C. 100905 is not highly

controversial, will not result in a significant alteration in the public use pattern of the System unit, will not adversely affect the System unit's natural, aesthetic, scenic or cultural values, or require a long-term or significant modification in the resource management objectives of the System unit, because the permit requirement is limited in time and scope to the specific activities authorized by the permit, which contain terms and conditions that protect the values, resources, and visitors of the System unit, and implements federal law.

36 CFR § 1.6 – ACTIVITIES THAT REQUIRE A PERMIT

Pursuant to 36 CFR § 1.6(f), the following activities are prohibited unless a permit has been issued by the Superintendent. The criteria for issuing permits are established by applicable law (statutes and regulations) and National Park Service policy. Permitted activities are subject to appropriate terms and conditions to protect park resources, values, and visitor safety.

Permits may be requested by contacting the park's **Permitting Office** or visiting the [Permit Page](#).

Note: Some activities listed below may not be currently authorized due to the park's urban setting, limited space, or lack of facilities. However, they are included because they are governed by federal regulations and could be proposed by a member of the public. The Superintendent may deny such requests based on incompatibility with park purposes, resource protection, or public safety concerns.

The following activities require a permit **within the area designated for special use at New Bedford Whaling National Historical Park**:

- **36 CFR § 1.5 – Closures and public use limits**
 - **Some filming, still photography, and audio recording (depends upon the facts and circumstances; contact the park for more information). 36 CFR 1.5(a)(2) and 54 U.S.C. 100905.**
- **36 CFR § 2.5 – Research specimens**
 - **(a) Taking wildlife, plants, rocks, or other resources for scientific research.**
- **36 CFR § 2.6 – Gathering of plants or plant parts by federally recognized Indian tribes for traditional purposes**
 - **(a) Gathering or removal of plants or plant parts by members of federally recognized Indian tribes.**
 - ***Note: This activity is not compatible with the urban park environment but remains subject to regulation..***
- **36 CFR § 2.12 – Audio disturbances**
 - **(a)(2) Operating a power saw in developed areas.**
 - **(a)(3) Operating a motor or engine in undeveloped areas.**
 - **(a)(4) Operating a public address system.**
- **36 CFR § 2.37 – Noncommercial soliciting**
 - **(a) Soliciting or demanding gifts, money, goods, or services.**
- **36 CFR § 2.50 – Special events**
 - **(a) Conducting a sports event, pageant, celebration, entertainment, wedding, cultural observance, ceremony, organized recreational activity, or other public gathering that is not solely for expressive activity.**

- Special events may involve setup of temporary structures, amplified sound, signage, or crowd control measures.
 - **Note:** *Events at New Bedford Whaling National Historical Park must be compatible with the park's historic setting, urban landscape, and neighboring community. Size, location, and timing may be limited.*
- **36 CFR § 2.51 – Demonstrations**
 - **(b) Conducting a demonstration involving more than 25 persons.**
 - The designated First Amendment area is located in the **Visitor Center Garden**, specifically in the **red brick area to the right of the accessibility ramp**.
 - View policy and map: nps.gov/nebe/planyourvisit/first-amendment.htm
- **36 CFR § 2.52 – Sale or distribution of printed matter**
 - **(b) Sale or distribution of printed matter or message-bearing items (e.g., leaflets, buttons, signs) by groups of more than 25 persons.**
 - Activity must remain within the designated First Amendment area and not disrupt park use or pedestrian movement.
- **36 CFR § 2.61 – Residing on federal lands**
 - **(a) Residing on park lands without authorization.**
 - **Note:** *This activity is not compatible with the urban park environment but remains subject to regulation.*
- **36 CFR § 2.62 – Memorialization**
 - **(b) Scattering of human ashes from cremation.**
 - **Note:** *This activity is not compatible with the urban park environment but remains subject to regulation.*
- **36 CFR § 5.1 – Advertisements**
 - **(a) Displaying, posting, or distributing commercial notices or advertisements without a permit.**
 - Includes posters, flyers, banners, digital screens, or signage promoting goods, services, or events.
 - Must be part of an authorized activity and compatible with park values and visual character.
- **36 CFR § 5.3 – Business operations**
 - **(a) Engaging in or soliciting any business, including the sale of food, beverages, or other commercial goods or services, without a permit or concession agreement.**
 - Business activity must meet NPS commercial use authorization or concessions requirements and be explicitly authorized.
- **36 CFR § 5.6 – Commercial vehicles**
 - **(a) Use of commercial vehicles on park roads, except when using designated routes for through traffic.**
 - **Note:** *This activity is not compatible with the urban park environment but remains subject to regulation.*
- **36 CFR § 5.7 – Construction of buildings or other facilities**
 - **(a) Construction or attempted construction of any building, structure, road, trail, path, or utility.**

- **Note:** *This activity is not compatible with the urban park environment but remains subject to regulation.*
- **36 CFR Part 14 – Rights-of-way**
 - Permit required for utility or access easements under NPS jurisdiction.
- **43 CFR Part 3 – Preservation of American Antiquities**
 - Examining ruins, excavating archeological sites, or gathering antiquities.
 - **Note:** *This activity is not compatible with the urban park environment but remains subject to regulation.*
- **43 CFR Part 7 – Protection of archeological resources**
 - Excavating, removing, or disturbing archeological resources on federal lands.
 - **Note:** *This activity is not compatible with the urban park environment but remains subject to regulation.*
- **43 CFR Part 49 – Paleontological resources preservation**
 - Collecting paleontological (fossil) resources.
 - **Note:** *This activity is not compatible with the urban park environment but remains subject to regulation.*
- **54 U.S.C. § 100905 – Filming, photography, and audio recording**
 - Some filming, still photography, and audio recording (depends upon the facts and circumstances; contact the park for more information). 36 CFR 1.5(a)(2) and 54 U.S.C. 100905.
 - View filming permit guidance: nps.gov/nebe/planyourvisit/film-permit.htm

36 CFR § 1.7 PUBLIC NOTICE AND NOTIFICATION

Pursuant to 36 CFR § 1.7, notice of restrictions, closures, designations, permit requirements, and other conditions imposed under discretionary authority (§ 1.5(a)) will be made available to the public by at least one of the following methods:

- Posting prominently at affected locations
- Distribution through news releases
- Alerts on the park’s official website (nps.gov/nebe)
- Social Media
 - [Facebook.com/NewBedfordNPS](https://www.facebook.com/NewBedfordNPS)

36 CFR Part 2 - Resource Protection, Public Use and Recreation

36 CFR § 2.1 – Preservation of Natural, Cultural, and Archeological Resources

Pursuant to 36 CFR § 2.1(a)(1), (2), (5), and (6), the following conditions apply on NPS-owned property within New Bedford Whaling National Historical Park, including but not limited to the Visitor Center (33 William Street), Corson Building (31 William Street), Link Building, and the Visitor Center Garden.

(a) Except as otherwise provided in this chapter, the following is prohibited:

(a)(1) – Possessing, destroying, injuring, defacing, removing, digging, or disturbing from its natural state:

The following are prohibited:

- Removing, cutting, damaging, or collecting any plant materials, flowers, tree limbs, or other vegetation on NPS-owned property.
- Possessing or collecting any part of a living or dead animal, including feathers, nests, or remains.

(a)(5) – Walking on, climbing, entering, ascending, descending, or traversing an archeological or cultural resource, monument, or statue, except in designated areas and under conditions established by the superintendent.

The following are prohibited:

- Walking on, climbing, or sitting on the granite steps, stone ledges, railings, or foundation elements of the Visitor Center, Corson Building, or Link Building, unless specifically designed for public use.
- Using interpretive panels, granite plinths, or fencing as seating, climbing structures, or for physical support.
- Digging, placing stakes, or inserting any object into the ground in the Visitor Center Garden or surrounding landscape is prohibited.
- Accessing exposed structural or archeological features during maintenance or construction without authorization.

(a)(6) – Possessing, destroying, injuring, defacing, removing, digging, or disturbing a structure or its furnishing or fixtures, or other cultural or archeological resources.

The following are prohibited:

- Damaging, removing, or tampering with exhibit panels, interpretive signs, furnishings, railings, fixtures, or building components of the **Visitor Center, Corson Building, Link Building, or Visitor Center Garden.**
- Affixing stickers, tape, posters, adhesives, or signage to any building, fence, panel, or NPS structure.
- Leaning items against buildings or fencing without permit approval.

Determination: *These conditions are necessary to prevent the degradation and defacement of historic and cultural resources located on NPS-owned property within New Bedford Whaling National Historical Park. The park is located in a dense urban environment with high pedestrian traffic, which increases the risk of incidental damage, vandalism, and unauthorized ground disturbance. The Visitor Center, Corson Building, and Link Building contain 19th-century architectural elements that are not designed for physical contact, climbing, or modern structural loads. The Visitor Center Garden, while not historically landscaped, is a managed park space where ground disturbance or the introduction of non-native species may cause environmental or infrastructural harm. These restrictions are consistent with federal preservation standards and NPS resource protection policies.*

36 CFR § 2.2 – Wildlife Protection

Pursuant to 36 CFR § 1.5(a)(1) and 36 CFR § 2.2(a)(1), (a)(2), (b), and (c), the following regulations are in effect on National Park Service-owned properties within the boundaries of New Bedford Whaling National Historical Park:

(a)(2) – The feeding, touching, teasing, frightening, or intentional disturbing of wildlife nesting, breeding, or other activities is prohibited.

The following specific actions are prohibited on NPS-owned property within the park:

- Feeding or attempting to feed urban wildlife, including but not limited to squirrels, rabbits, seagulls, and gull chicks (baby seagulls).
- Disturbing active nests or nesting sites located in trees, gardens, building eaves, signage, or architectural ledges, especially during breeding season for gulls and other bird species.

Determination: *New Bedford Whaling National Historical Park is located in a densely developed urban area where rabbits, squirrels, seagulls, and particularly gull chicks (baby seagulls) during nesting season are frequently observed on and around NPS-owned property, including the Visitor Center Garden. Gull nests are commonly located on rooftops, and it is not unusual for gull chicks to fall from the roof of the Visitor Center or surrounding buildings. While these chicks may appear abandoned or in distress, they are often still under parental care and should not be handled, moved, or fed. Urban wildlife may become habituated to human presence and food, leading to nuisance behavior, dependency, aggression, and public health risks. These restrictions are necessary to protect wildlife, ensure visitor safety, and maintain compliance with National Park Service urban wildlife management standards.*

36 CFR § 2.4 – Weapons, Traps, and Nets

Pursuant to 36 CFR § 2.4(a), the following are prohibited on NPS-owned property within New Bedford Whaling National Historical Park:

- The carrying or possession of concealed firearms is subject to Massachusetts state licensing requirements. The NPS does not issue or recognize exemptions beyond what is provided under state law.

Determination: *New Bedford Whaling National Historical Park is located in a densely populated urban setting and consists entirely of NPS-owned historic structures, administrative facilities, and visitor use areas. There is no backcountry, hunting access, or wildlife harvesting allowed. These restrictions are necessary to protect visitors, staff, and historic resources from the risks associated with the use and possession of weapons and trapping devices. The presence or discharge of such items is incompatible with the cultural landscape and public safety needs of the park. These conditions are consistent with NPS public safety policy and the intent of 36 CFR § 2.4.*

36 CFR § 2.10 – Camping and Food Storage

Pursuant to 36 CFR § 2.10(a), (b), (c), and (d), the following regulations apply on National Park Service-owned (NPS-owned) property within the boundaries of New Bedford Whaling National Historical Park:

(a) – Camping Permits and Designations

- Camping is prohibited in all areas of NPS-owned property within New Bedford Whaling National Historical Park.

***Determination:** New Bedford Whaling National Historical Park is a compact, day-use site located in a densely developed urban environment. All NPS-owned property within the park is intended for short-term visitor engagement and interpretive use. The Visitor Center Garden is open during regular park hours but is not to be used for rest, sleep, or extended occupancy. The Visitor Center accessibility ramp is a designated ADA-compliant route and must always remain fully accessible and unobstructed. Improper food storage, unattended waste, and unauthorized cooking or camping increase safety risks, attract nuisance wildlife, and compromise visitor access and resource protection. These restrictions are necessary to uphold public safety, protect historic and cultural assets, and maintain equitable access in alignment with National Park Service policies and 36 CFR.*

36 CFR § 2.11 – Picnicking

Pursuant to 36 CFR § 2.11, the following conditions apply to picnicking on National Park Service-owned (NPS-owned) property within the boundaries of New Bedford Whaling National Historical Park:

- Picnicking is permitted in the Visitor Center Garden
- Picnicking is not permitted on building steps, entrances, doorways, interpretive panels, granite plinths, or the accessibility ramp on NPS-owned property.
- Picnicking must not interfere with public walkways, access to facilities, or park operations.

***Determination:** New Bedford Whaling National Historical Park is a compact, day-use urban site where visitors are welcome to enjoy food in a designated setting while respecting the historic landscape and fellow park users. The Visitor Center Garden provides a peaceful environment for responsible picnicking during business hours. The park's pack-in, pack-out policy and Leave No Trace expectations support ongoing cleanliness, wildlife safety, and public accessibility. Prohibiting picnicking on steps, ramps, and interpretive features ensures that walkways and accessible routes remain safe and compliant with federal accessibility standards. These regulations promote sustainable use of public space and are consistent with National Park Service management goals under 36 CFR.*

36 CFR § 2.12 – Audio Disturbances

Pursuant to 36 CFR § 2.12(a) and (b), the following conditions apply on National Park Service-owned (NPS-owned) property within the boundaries of New Bedford Whaling National Historical Park:

(a)(1) – Operation of motorized equipment or audio devices in an unreasonable or disruptive manner

The following are prohibited on NPS-owned property within the park:

- Operating audio devices (including but not limited to radios, Bluetooth speakers, musical instruments, phone speakers, or amplifiers) or any motorized equipment at a volume that:
 - Exceeds 60 decibels when measured on the A-weighted scale at 50 feet; or
 - Is unreasonable, considering the historic and educational character of the park, the proximity to other visitors, the intended use of the area, the time of day, and the overall impact on visitor experience.
 - This applies to both outdoor and indoor spaces.

Determination: *These restrictions are necessary to protect the visitor experience, support public programming, and maintain a respectful and accessible environment on NPS-owned property. Many areas within the park, such as the Visitor Center Garden and the Makerspace inside the Corson Building are designed to support public engagement, quiet reflection, educational programming, and creative interpretation. Unreasonable or amplified sound within these spaces can interfere with visitor enjoyment, interpretive presentations, school programs, and accessibility for individuals with sensory sensitivities.*

36 CFR § 2.13 – Fires

Pursuant to 36 CFR § 2.13(a) through (d), the following conditions apply on National Park Service-owned (NPS-owned) property within the boundaries of New Bedford Whaling National Historical Park:

(a) – Fire Prohibited

The following activities are prohibited on NPS-owned property within the park:

- Open flames, charcoal grills, or cooking devices are not permitted on park grounds.

Determination: *These fire restrictions are necessary to protect historic structures, cultural landscapes, and visitor safety on NPS-owned property within New Bedford Whaling National Historical Park. The park is located in a densely developed urban area and does not contain campgrounds, fire pits, or designated areas for open flame use. Any open flame, including matches, grills, candles, or portable stoves, poses a risk to historic resources and the surrounding community. These regulations ensure the safe use of public space, minimize the potential for accidental ignition, and support the park’s mission to preserve irreplaceable historic assets.*

36 CFR § 2.14 – Sanitation and Refuse

Pursuant to 36 CFR § 2.14(a) and (b), the following regulations apply on National Park Service-owned (NPS-owned) property within the boundaries of New Bedford Whaling National Historical Park:

(a) – Prohibited Sanitation and Refuse Activities The following activities are prohibited on NPS-owned property within the park, including inside and outside the Visitor Center, Corson Building, Link Building connecting the two, and the Visitor Center Garden:

(a)(1) Disposing of refuse in any location other than appropriate waste receptacles.

- *Note: There are no public trash bins on NPS-owned property. All visitors must follow a pack-in, pack-out policy.*

(a)(5) Bathing, washing food, clothing, dishes and other property at public outlets except where designated is prohibited.

- The Superintendent has not designated any areas for bathing, and/or washing.

(a)(8) Disposal of human waste, except in designated areas is prohibited.

- The Superintendent has not designated any areas for waste disposal

(b) – Waste Disposal Conditions

- The park follows a pack-in, pack-out policy.
- All personal items, trash, and waste, including sharps, must be removed and disposed of in accordance with public health and local waste regulations.
- *Note: No sharps disposal containers are provided. Sharps must be carried out and disposed of properly offsite.*

Determination: *This determination is necessary to protect public health, safety, and accessibility on NPS-owned property at New Bedford Whaling National Historical Park, including the Visitor Center, Corson Building, Link Building, and Visitor Center Garden. These areas serve as high-use public spaces for interpretation and education in a dense urban setting. The abandonment of waste and personal items has created sanitation hazards and obstructed ADA access. These restrictions are essential to ensuring the safe, clean, and respectful use of this nationally significant site.*

36 CFR § 2.15 – Pets

Pursuant to 36 CFR § 1.5(a)(1) and § 2.15(a)–(f), the following conditions and restrictions apply to pets on National Park Service-owned property within New Bedford Whaling National Historical Park:

(a)(1) – Pets in Public Buildings and Restricted Areas

Pets are prohibited inside all NPS-owned public buildings.

- **Exception:** Service animals trained to perform tasks for individuals with disabilities, as defined by the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), are permitted.
 - **Note:** Emotional support, therapy, or comfort animals are not considered service animals under the ADA and are not permitted indoors.

(a)(2) – Restraint of Pets

Pets must be physically restrained at all times on park property, including sidewalks, entrances, and the Visitor Center Garden. Acceptable restraint methods include:

- A leash no longer than six feet
- An enclosed carrier or fully enclosed pet stroller
 - **Note:** Voice control or electronic collars are not acceptable alternatives.

(a)(5) – Pet Waste

All pet waste must be immediately picked up and removed from park property. There are no pet waste receptacles on-site.

- Waste must not be left in planters, tree pits, garden beds, or restroom trash cans
- Bagged waste left on fences, benches, or in the Visitor Center Garden is considered litter

Determination: *This determination is necessary to protect public safety, preserve park resources, and maintain accessibility on NPS-owned property within New Bedford Whaling National Historical Park, including the Visitor Center, Corson Building, Link Building, and Visitor Center Garden. Due to the park's urban location and lack of pet amenities such as waste bins, tie-off areas, and dog-friendly spaces, all waste must be removed by the owner. Pets left unattended, barking, or disturbing nesting baby seagulls, rabbits, or squirrels can create safety issues and disrupt public programs. Pet waste, noise, and obstructions near the accessibility ramp have presented hazards to visitors, particularly those with disabilities. These restrictions help preserve a clean, respectful, and welcoming environment for all park users.*

36 CFR § 2.20 – Skating, Skateboards, and Similar Devices

Pursuant to 36 CFR § 1.5(a)(1) and § 2.20, the following conditions apply to National Park Service–owned property within the boundaries of New Bedford Whaling National Historical Park:

- The use of roller skates, skateboards, roller skis, hoverboards, scooters, coasting vehicles, or similar wheeled or recreational devices is prohibited on all NPS-owned property.

Determination: *This determination is necessary to reduce visitor safety risks, prevent damage to cultural resources, and maintain accessible pedestrian routes in a dense urban park environment. The Visitor Center, Corson Building, Link Building, and Visitor Center Garden are frequently used for public programs, quiet reflection, and school visits. The accessibility ramp leading to the Link Building must remain unobstructed at all times. Use of wheeled recreational devices in these areas has caused damage to masonry, railings, benches, and walkways, and poses safety hazards for visitors and staff.*

36 CFR § 2.21 – Smoking

Pursuant to 36 CFR § 1.5(a)(1) and § 2.21, the following conditions apply to National Park Service–owned property within the boundaries of New Bedford Whaling National Historical Park:

Smoking is prohibited in the following areas:

- Smoking and use of electronic cigarettes (ENDS) are prohibited inside and outside all park buildings and within 25 feet of buildings entrances.
- Smoking and the use of electronic cigarettes (ENDS) within the garden is prohibited.
- Electronic Nicotine Delivery Systems (ENDS) such as e-cigarettes, vape pens, and similar devices, regardless of the substance being consumed

There are no designated smoking areas on NPS-owned property within the park.

Determination: *This determination is necessary to reduce fire risk, limit exposure to secondhand smoke or vapor, and maintain a safe, welcoming environment in this urban park setting. The Corson Building, Visitor Center, Link Building, and Visitor Center Garden are heavily used for educational programs, visitor services, and community events. Smoking and vaping in or near these areas have resulted in litter, fire hazards near landscaping, and discomfort for visitors—especially those with respiratory conditions or sensory sensitivities. Prohibiting smoking in these locations supports public health and protects park resources.*

36 CFR § 2.22 – Property

Pursuant to 36 CFR § 1.5(a)(1) and § 2.22, the following conditions apply to all National Park Service-owned property within the boundaries of New Bedford Whaling National Historical Park, including the Visitor Center, Link Building, Corson Building, and the Visitor Center Garden:

(a) The following are prohibited:

(a)(1) Abandoning property, including but not limited to luggage, carts, clothing, bedding, bicycles, art supplies, or electronic devices.

(a)(2) Leaving property unattended for longer than 24 hours is considered abandoned.

Determination: *This determination is necessary to protect park resources, ensure visitor safety, and prevent interference with operations and public access within this densely used urban park. Abandoning property within New Bedford Whaling National Historical Park, including within the Visitor Center, Link Building, Corson Building, and Visitor Center Garden, interferes with the visitor experience, obstructs pathways and ADA routes, and can obscure important viewsheds of the historic cultural landscape. Abandoned or unattended items such as bedding, clothing, cameras, or art supplies may pose safety or security concerns. The use of park electrical outlets for charging personal items is prohibited due to the absence of designated charging stations. The park enforces a "no abandoned property" policy across all NPS-owned areas.*

36 CFR § 2.35 – Alcoholic Beverages and Controlled Substances

Pursuant to 36 CFR § 1.5(a)(1) and § 2.35, the following regulations apply on all National Park Service (NPS)-owned property within the boundaries of New Bedford Whaling National Historical Park, including the Visitor Center, Link Building, Corson Building, Visitor Center Garden, and other federally managed areas:

(a) Alcoholic Beverages

(a)(1) The use and possession of alcoholic beverages within park areas is prohibited.

(a)(3) The Superintendent has closed all NPS-owned property in the park to the consumption of alcoholic beverages and the possession of open alcoholic beverage containers, pursuant to 36 CFR § 2.35(a)(3):

- (i) The consumption of alcoholic beverages or possession of open alcoholic beverage containers is prohibited.

(b) Control Substances

- Control substances are prohibited on within park areas, unless such substance is obtained by valid prescription.

Determination: *This determination is necessary to maintain the integrity of public use areas designed for educational, interpretive, and family-friendly experiences. The park's facilities including the Visitor Center, Link Building, Corson Building, and Visitor Center Garden are frequently used for school visits, formal events, and public interpretation. Alcohol consumption or possession in these spaces creates conflict with these uses, invites the potential for disorderly conduct, and increases the risk of property damage. Given the urban context of the park and its open environment, the potential for misuse is heightened. Closing all NPS-owned property within the park to alcohol ensures safe, respectful, and inclusive public access.*

36 CFR § 2.37 – Noncommercial Soliciting

Pursuant to 36 CFR § 1.5(a)(1) and § 2.37, the following regulation applies on all National Park Service (NPS)-owned property within the boundaries of New Bedford Whaling National Historical Park, including the Visitor Center, Link Building, Corson Building, Visitor Center Garden, and other federally managed areas:

(a) Soliciting or demanding gifts, money, goods, or services is prohibited, except pursuant to the terms and conditions of a valid permit issued under:

- § 2.50 (Special Events)
- § 2.51 (Demonstrations)
- § 2.52 (Sale or Distribution of Printed Matter and Other Message-Bearing Items)

Determination: *This determination is necessary to preserve the visitor experience, ensure public safety, and maintain unobstructed access to park facilities and interpretive programs. As an urban park with limited federal property embedded within downtown New Bedford, this park experiences high pedestrian use, including by families, school groups, and visitors participating in educational programs. Unregulated noncommercial solicitation in or around the Visitor Center, Linking Building, Corson Building, and Visitor Center Garden can create congestion, interfere with interpretive services, and lead to confusion about official National Park Service activities. Requiring a permit for such activity ensures the orderly use of public space while protecting constitutionally protected free speech.*

36 CFR § 2.51 – Demonstrations and Designated Available Park Areas

Pursuant to 36 CFR § 2.51 and § 1.5(a)(1), the following regulations apply on all National Park Service (NPS)-owned property within the boundaries of the park, including the **Visitor Center**, Corson Building, Link Building, Visitor Center Garden, and other federally managed areas:

Designated First Amendment Area

The designated First Amendment area is located in the red brick section to the right of the ramp in the Visitor Center Garden. A map and image of the designated area are provided in Appendix A of this compendium.

(a) Demonstrations

- (b)** The term “demonstrations” includes demonstrations, picketing, speechmaking, marching, holding vigils or religious services, and all other like forms of conduct that involve the communication or expression of views or grievances, engaged in by one or more persons, the conduct of which is reasonably likely to attract a crowd or onlookers. This term does not include casual park use by visitors or tourists that is not reasonably likely to attract a crowd or onlookers.

(b) Permits and the small group permit exception

Demonstrations are allowed within designated areas only when the Superintendent has issued a permit, except:

- Demonstrations involving 25 persons or fewer may occur without a permit within the designated First Amendment area, provided that:
 - The group is not acting as an extension of another group using the small-group exception.
 - Activities do not interfere with permitted events, programs, or visitor services.
 - Only hand-carried signs are used; no stages, platforms, structures and/or sound equipment.

***Determination:** This determination is necessary to balance the rights of free expression with the need to protect visitor safety, preserve historic and cultural landscapes, and ensure uninterrupted operation of public programs in an urban national park setting. The designated area in the Visitor Center Garden provides appropriate visibility and access while preventing interference with accessibility ramps, building entrances, and park programming. Larger gatherings, amplified sound, or physical structures can obstruct park operations and detract from the visitor experience. The permit system ensures that all demonstrations can be safely accommodated without conflicting with other permitted uses or public access.*

36 CFR § 2.52 – Sale and Distribution of Printed Matter and Other Message-Bearing Items

Pursuant to 36 CFR § 1.5(a)(1), § 1.6, § 2.51, and § 2.52, the sale or distribution of printed matter (such as books, pamphlets, or leaflets) and the free distribution of other message-bearing items (such as buttons, pins, bumper stickers, or clothing with a message) is subject to the following regulations on all NPS-owned property within New Bedford Whaling National Historical Park:

(a) Designated Area:

All sales or distributions of printed or message-bearing materials must take place only within the designated First Amendment area (Visitor Center Garden), with approval via permit or under 25 people. This brick-paved garden space provides clear visibility while maintaining visitor flow and accessibility. No stakes, digging, or structures are permitted, as this area contains underground infrastructure.

(b) Permit Requirements:

A permit is required for any such activity unless the small group permit exception applies. This exception allows up to 25 people to distribute or sell message-bearing items without a permit, provided that:

- The group is not part of a larger coordinated effort already using the exception.
- The activity does not interfere with permitted park events, educational programs, or visitor services.
- No structures, tables, platforms, or signage are erected.

Determination: *This is necessary to maintain an appropriate balance between First Amendment rights and the preservation of a respectful, educational, and family-friendly environment in a dense urban setting. The Visitor Center Garden has been selected as the designated space due to its visibility, access, and distance from educational programming in the Corson and Visitor Center buildings. Restrictions on structures, signage, and placement help protect underground utilities and maintain accessibility. These guidelines ensure that expressive activity can occur without interfering with park operations, public safety, or the visitor experience.*

36 CFR § 2.62 – Memorialization

Pursuant to 36 CFR § 1.5(a)(1) and § 2.62, the following regulations apply to all National Park Service (NPS)-owned properties within the boundaries of New Bedford Whaling National Historical Park, including the Visitor Center, Corson Building, Link Building, Visitor Center Garden, and all other federally managed spaces:

(a) Unauthorized Installations

The installation of any monument, memorial, plaque, bench, tablet, sculpture, or other commemorative object on National Park Service property is strictly prohibited unless explicitly authorized in writing by the Director of the National Park Service. No areas within the park are currently designated for permanent or temporary memorial installations.

(b) Scattering of Ashes

The scattering of human ashes from cremation is not permitted anywhere within New Bedford Whaling National Historical Park, including in outdoor areas such as the Visitor Center Garden. The park does not have any designated areas for ash scattering, and no permits will be issued for this purpose.

Determination: *This determination is necessary due to the urban, small-footprint, and historically sensitive nature of New Bedford Whaling National Historical Park. The park preserves nationally significant structures and public spaces that are not appropriate for scattering of remains or for the installation of private commemorative items. The prohibition ensures the protection of historic resources, maintains the intended purpose of shared public space, and avoids conflicts with interpretive and visitor service operations. In keeping with federal policy and the park's commemorative intent, memorialization activities are not permitted.*

POLICY DISCLOSURES

1. Closed Circuit Television (CCTV) Policy Statement

In accordance with National Park Service Law Enforcement Reference Manual 9 (RM-9), notice is hereby given that New Bedford Whaling National Historical Park uses Closed Circuit Television (CCTV) security camera monitoring.

The park's use of Closed Circuit Television (CCTV) for law enforcement and security purposes is limited to visually monitoring public park areas and public activities where no constitutionally protected reasonable expectation of privacy exists. Such CCTV use—including privacy and First Amendment safeguards—is intended to help ensure public safety and security; facilitate the detection, investigation, prevention, and deterrence of crime or terrorist activity; assist in the deployment of public safety resources; and support the protection of visitors, staff, and park resources. (RM-9, 26.1)

This policy does not restrict the official use of CCTV in government administrative areas, including offices, administrative buildings, jail holding facilities (RM-9, 26.3.7), or revenue collection sites. For example, unrestricted video/audio recording may occur at revenue collection points such as visitor center counters. This policy also does not restrict the use of Audio/Visual Recording Devices (AVRD) in patrol vehicles or officer-worn recording devices used by commissioned law enforcement rangers. (RM-9, 26.1)

Operation of CCTV systems, management of recorded footage, and the use of those recordings will comply with NPS and Department of the Interior policies, applicable laws, and regulations. (RM-9, 26.1–26.4) No person will be targeted or monitored based on race, religion, gender, sex, disability, national origin, political affiliation, or views. (RM-9, 26.4.2)

Nothing in this policy statement is intended to create any rights, privileges, or benefits not otherwise recognized by law.

2. Visitor Support

New Bedford Whaling National Historical Park is committed to providing meaningful experiences for all visitors, including those with disabilities. The park follows federal laws, including Section 504 and Section 508 of the Rehabilitation Act, to ensure that everyone has the opportunity to experience park programs, facilities, and digital content.

Park features include ramps, restrooms, and exhibits designed to support visitors with physical, sensory, or cognitive needs. Some historic buildings and outdoor areas may have limitations due to terrain or preservation requirements, but staff are available to assist where possible.

Visitors who have specific needs or requests are encouraged to contact the park before their visit. Staff will do their best to provide support in a timely and thoughtful way.

To request assistance or learn more, please contact:

New Bedford Whaling National Historical Park

33 William Street, New Bedford, MA 02740

Phone: 508-996-4095

Email: NEBE_info@nps.gov

SPECIFIC PARK NOTICES

New Bedford Whaling National Historical Park is unique in that it is an **urban “partnership” park**, consisting of a historic district with many sites owned by various partners. The NPS **owns and manages only a few properties** outright (notably the connected buildings of the Visitor Center, Link Building, Corson Building, and Visitor Center Garden at 33 William Street). Other key sites within the authorized park boundary – such as the New Bedford Whaling Museum, Seamen's Bethel, Mariners' Home, Rotch-Jones-Duff House, and others – are owned by private organizations or the city and operate under their

own management. The regulations in this compendium **apply only to federally owned or administered lands** and facilities of the park ([Special Use Permit - New Bedford Whaling National Historical Park \(U.S. National Park Service\)](#)). Visitors should be aware of the following park-specific nuances:

- **Partner Sites and Non-Federal Areas:** When visiting attractions like the New Bedford Whaling Museum or the Seamen's Bethel within the park, remember that those facilities have their own rules (e.g., hours, admission fees, photography policies, etc.). The NPS does not regulate behavior inside those partner buildings, though generally their rules will be similar in spirit (for example, museums prohibit smoking and require shirts and shoes, etc.). If you have questions about a specific building not operated by NPS, please inquire at that site or at the NPS visitor center for guidance.
- **Historic Building Access:** Several historic structures within park boundaries are **currently closed to public entry** for preservation or safety reasons. For example, the **Double Bank Building** on Water Street and the **Candleworks Building** on Johnny Cake Hill are noted as "Closed to Public" ([compendium - New Bedford Whaling National Historical Park \(U.S. National Park Service\)](#)), meaning visitors may view them from outside but may not enter. These closures are in effect until further notice. Similarly, the **U.S. Custom House** (a historic building on North Second Street) is generally **closed to the public**, as it is used for federal offices or is not in use. Visitors should respect all signage indicating an area or building is closed, and not attempt to enter locked doors or barricaded areas. Trespassing into closed structures not only violates regulations but could be dangerous.

Emergency Procedures and Public Safety Measures

Designated Evacuation Assembly Locations: In the event of a fire, medical emergency, or other incident requiring evacuation, all occupants must immediately proceed to the designated assembly points for their location:

- **Visitor Center:** Assembly Point: *Custom House Square*
- **Link Building:** Assembly Point: *Custom House Square*
- **Corson Building:** Assembly Point: *New Bedford Whaling Museum Plaza*
 - *1st Floor:* Exit via the green door in the Preservation Room/Gallery Space.
 - *2nd Floor:* Exit via stairway inside the MakerSpace main area.
 - *3rd Floor:* Exit via stairway in kitchen area.

Wheelchair Access and Emergency Response Points

The following areas serve as key locations for wheelchair users or individuals requiring assistance. These locations must remain clear at all times to facilitate emergency response.

- **Visitor Center:** Exit via the Link ramp door, if accessible
- **Link Building:** Exit via the door in the Visitor Center hallway that leads to ADA Ramp, if accessible.
- **Corson Building**
 - *2nd Floor:* Kitchen area
 - *3rd Floor:* Superintendent's Office

Elevator Usage During Emergency Evacuations

- Elevators are prohibited for use during fire emergencies unless specifically designated for emergency evacuation and explicitly authorized by emergency responders. Currently, **no elevators within park facilities are approved for emergency evacuation use.**

APPENDIX

Appendix A: Designated First Amendment Area Map

The designated First Amendment area is located in the Visitor Center Garden, specifically in the red brick plaza to the right of the accessibility ramp leading to the Corson Building entrance.

This space is identified on the official park map and marked in green, adjacent to the National Park Visitor Center at 33 William Street. It is bordered by granite planters and framed by landscaped plantings and public walkways.

Map:



Note: This space is accessible and ADA-compliant. Park rules regarding group size, permit requirements, and conduct apply in this area.

Appendix B: Reference Information

- **Legal Authorities:** This compendium is issued under the authority of Title 54 United States Code (National Park Service Organic Act) and Title 36 Code of Federal Regulations. Specific sections invoked include 36 CFR 1.5 (closures and restrictions), 1.6 (permits), and provisions of Part 2, 4, and 5 as cited in the text. Additionally, 54 United States Code 100905.
- **Supporting Policies:** The compendium's provisions conform to NPS Management Policies 2006, NPS Director's Orders, and applicable federal laws. For example, the closure on drones aligns with **Policy Memorandum 14-05 (Unmanned Aircraft)** which prohibits unmanned aircraft in parks unless approved.
- **Effective Date:** January 1, 2026 (unless updated sooner).

- **Annual Review:** This document will be reviewed each year and updated as necessary by the Superintendent. Changes will be made available to the public with a new approval signature and date.
- **Contact Information:** For permits, questions, or more information about any regulation herein, contact: *Superintendent, New Bedford Whaling National Historical Park, 33 William Street, New Bedford, MA 02740. Phone: 508-996-4095.* Additional info is also available on the park's official website.

End of Superintendent's Compendium – 2026.