Guest Rules of Civility Policy
Date Updated: February 1, 2016

“Every Action done in Company, ought to be with Some Sign of Respect, to those that are Present.”
The Rules of Civility & Decent Behavior in Company and Conversation, transcribed by G. Washington, circa 1744

When he was a young boy, George Washington copied 110 maxims from a book entitled The Rules of Civility & Decent Behavior in Company and Conversation as a penmanship exercise. Even though he wrote them down over 200 years ago, many of these rules are still relevant today. To ensure a positive guest experience for all, we ask guests to observe and adhere to the following rules:

I. Appropriate attire, including a shirt, is required when on Mount Vernon property. Shoes must also be worn at all times. Shoes with cleats are not permitted.

II. Smoking and use of electronic cigarettes are not permitted indoors or in the historic area.

III. To minimize damage to structures or the environment, eating or drinking, with the exception of clear bottled water, is not permitted on the property, except in the Mount Vernon Inn Complex, or in designated areas during special events. Chewing gum and other candy is not permitted on the estate.

IV. For the safety of our heritage breeds, disturbing or feeding animals is not permitted.

V. Photography is not permitted in the Mansion or Museum. Video and audio recordings of tours, programs, and films are likewise not permitted. Related equipment, including tripods and selfie sticks, are not permitted where photography is prohibited. Professional photography is not permitted without special permission on the estate and at the Distillery & Gristmill. For more information, please see the Professional Group Photography policy located at mountvernon.org/plan-your-visit/tips-for-your-visit/group-photography-policy/.

VI. Damaging or removing objects, or tampering with modern or historic structures, is not permitted.

VII. Damaging or picking from gardens and landscape features is not permitted.

VIII. Inappropriate treatment, including unwelcome conduct, of guests or any Mount Vernon representative (staff and volunteers), whether verbal, physical, or visual, is not permitted. Use or display of obscene or abusive language is not permitted.

IX. Engaging in disorderly conduct or participating in unauthorized assemblies is not permitted. Displaying signs or distributing solicitations, advertisements, or other materials without prior approval from Mount Vernon is not permitted.

X. Sporting activity (for example, frisbees, footballs, and hacky sacks) is not permitted without prior approval from Mount Vernon.

XI. Use of Unmanned Aircraft Systems (drones), or any similar remote-controlled vehicles/flying devices, is not permitted on the property without prior approval from Mount Vernon.

XII. For your safety, bags larger than 16x16x8 inches are prohibited from the property; all bags will be inspected. For more information and prohibited items, see our Bag Inspection policy and Prohibited Items at mountvernon.org/plan-your-visit/tips-for-your-visit/bag-inspection-policy-prohibited-items/

Thank you for your cooperation.
Failure to observe these guidelines may result in removal from the property.