

NATIONAL PARK SERVICE NATIONAL CAPITAL REGION

Requirements for Special Events Held on Parkland



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NATIONAL PARK SERVICE
National Capital Region

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Introduction

Thank you for your interest in the National Parks in the Washington, DC area. The following information on requirements for special event permits applies to Federal parkland administered by National Park Service's National Capital Region in the District of Columbia and in Arlington, Fairfax, Loudoun, Prince William, and Stafford Counties and the City of Alexandria in Virginia and Prince Georges, Charles, Anne Arundel, and Montgomery Counties in Maryland.

Your National Parks are home to many unique and beautiful landscapes and open spaces that are frequently used venues for a variety of special activities such as cultural programs, picnics, wedding ceremonies, festivals, athletic events, and film and photography projects. Among all of these varied activities are "special events," which require a permit, and include sports events, pageants, celebrations, historical reenactments, entertainment, exhibitions, parades, fairs, festivals and similar activities by one or more persons the conduct of which has the effect, intent or propensity to draw a crowd or onlookers. This term does not include demonstrations. All special events require that you apply for and obtain a special event permit, issued only after the National Park Service determines that your proposed activity will not impair park values and resources and are consistent with Title 36 of the Code of Federal Regulations § 7.96(g)(C)(vi)¹.

All special event applications must be accompanied by a \$50.00 payment to cover administrative costs in processing the application. This charge is a one time, non-refundable amount. Payment of application costs may be in the form of a check, money order, or credit card. No application will be processed unless: (1) the application processing payment is enclosed or (2) the application is for a use that has been determined to not be subject to cost recovery, such as a First Amendment activity.

The theme of your special event must be consistent with the mission of the park, whether the park is reasonably suited in terms of accessibility and size, and whether your proposed event is within our reasonable budgetary allocations. We will also consider whether the event is appropriate to the park area in which it is to be held, including consideration for possible damage and/or impairment to park property, facilities, plantings and landscape features, statues and monuments, and park values. Issuance of a permit is subject to the applicant's fulfillment of all applicable requirements.

These Special Event Requirements are intended to advise and alert applicants of various issues that we will be discussing with you as we process your application. Certain special events--that either involve extensive logistical set-up, or the erection, construction or placement of structures or equipment such as tents, stands, platforms or portable toilets, or where the sale or give-away of food is contemplated--will require us to address issues such as bonds, hold harmless agreements, insurance, and the proper and safe means to sell or give-away food. By working together with these issues early, we hope that your permitted special event will be safe, successful and enjoyable.

¹ Authority: 16 USC 1, 3a, 9a; 36 CFR 1.6, 2.50, 7.96; NPS Management Policies (2006); NPS RM-53 Guidelines. The purpose of these Requirements is to set forth the National Capital Region construction of statutes and regulations regarding special events held on Federal parkland.

Part I. Requirements for Special Events Held on Parkland in the National Capital Region:

1) Provision of Support by NPS:

All costs of presentation of the event must be borne, in their entirety, by the Permittee. The National Park Service cannot provide logistical support items such as chairs, tents, portable toilets, and/or portable utilities and sound systems. If desired by an applicant, however, these support items may be rented from various commercial sources. If accessible park utilities (water or electricity) exist on site, these may be made available for a daily fee for the duration of the event. The amount of the fee will be provided to the Permittee and incorporated into the bond.

Capacities of some of these existing systems are limited, and may not be sufficient to satisfy all the needs of the event. Only existing electric outlets may be used. Electrical control rooms and electrical boxes requiring modification before use during the event may not be used. Questions concerning available utilities should be directed to the park representative handling your permit, at contact number that we will provide to you.

2) Check-In and Out Procedures:

It is the Permittee's responsibility to contact the NPS representative, at the park where the event is being held, at least 48 hours prior to the event, to schedule an appointment to meet on-site to discuss logistical set-up and other permit conditions. At this time, a time for a post-event site inspection should also be established.

3) Risk Management:

The items listed below are general guidelines for all events. Based on the size and scope of your particular event, additional guidance will be provided to you during the planning stages. This includes:

- All pathways and roadways must remain open and unobstructed
- No open fires (cooking or otherwise) are permitted on parkland.
- Except when being driven on established public vehicular roadways: Logistical equipment and vehicles, including gas and electric carts, must not exceed 5-mph. All trucks with a GVW of over 7500 pounds, and equipment such as bucket trucks, platform lifts, forklifts, and cranes, must be accompanied by a walking spotter when moving or operating in an area accessible to the public.
- Propane may be permitted for purposes of cooking and/or heating, however, restrictions on the number and size of propane cylinders present on parkland will apply.
- ~~For set-up and take down construction, work cannot exceed 10 hours per day. A request~~ of a waiver for an extended day beyond the ten-hour period must be submitted in writing to the Superintendent for approval. The Permittee will be responsible for paying all personnel overtime charges related to the assignment of National Park Service employees and/or National Park Service contractors for monitoring set-up and take down construction.
- For events with significant equipment use during set-up and tear-down, the Permittee may be required to submit a risk management plan. See the attached submittal timeline.

4) Resource Protection:

Existing natural and cultural resources, and landscape features, must be protected from damage or injury. Based on the size and scope of your event a number of additional conditions may

apply, however, the following specific items should be noted for all activities:

- Stakes for tents, staging, towers, signs, or other structures can not be driven more than eighteen (18) inches into the ground, and must avoid all underground pipes and fixtures.
- In lieu of stakes, water filled ballast tanks must be used on any park hardscape surfaces, which include plazas and other areas comprised of asphalt, concrete, granite, wood, etc.
- No digging or trenching is permitted.
- No attachments may be made to existing landscape features, or pass through or be affixed to existing trees or other vegetation.
- No set-up of structures, or parking or operation of equipment, is permitted within any tree canopy (root zone) area. On the National Mall, set-up is permitted only within the center grass panels. As a condition of the permit, the Permittee may be required to install tree-protection fencing.
- In an effort to reduce impact to turf areas, the organizer/Permittee may be required to provide and install temporary equipment roadways, pedestrian walkways and/or tent flooring fabricated from commercially-available interlocking plastic composite materials, or other protective material if approved in advance by the NPS. Plywood is not considered to be effective for use as temporary walkway or equipment roadway and will not be approved. Based upon the specific layout of your event, your designated NPS representative can provide further guidance during your scheduled logistical meeting.
- Helium-filled balloons: Helium-filled balloons pose a danger to the health and safety of wildlife and create a litter problem. Therefore, no releases of helium-filled balloons into the atmosphere within a park will be authorized, except for research or planning purposes specifically authorized by permit. (NPS Management Policies 8.6.2.2)
- Glass containers: No glass containers are permitted on parkland.

5) Site Plan:

If tents, stages, or any other type of structure are to be placed on parkland, stakes driven, or any other ground-disturbing activity conducted, a complete site plan must be submitted to the Superintendent at least thirty (30) days in advance of the opening day of the proposed special event. For large-scale events requiring major set-up, submittals must be provided a minimum of forty-five (45) days in advance. The site plan, drawn to a scale of 1 inch equals no more than 50 feet (please note that more complex set-ups may require more precise drawings), will clearly display all structures, including food, beverage and first-aid tents, sound and lighting towers, generators and cable runs, and security or crowd-control fencing. Large-scale structures, such as tents and towers, may require the submission of engineered drawings stamped by a structural engineer licensed in the United States. The site plan should be made available as soon as possible to allow for adjustments to site plan due to existing park conditions (utility lines, plantings, landscape features, etc.) and a more accurate estimate of the required bond. No construction or site work may begin without prior official approval. Please note that the Permittee assumes responsibility for assuring that the actual set-up accurately reflects that which has been submitted on the final site plan.

6) First Aid:

Additionally, first-aid and emergency response systems should be organized by the Permittee. This includes any first aid tents, CPR/AED certified personnel, and necessary equipment. Events with larger crowds expected may need to collaborate with local EMT units for ambulance services and professional EMS staff on-site. It is recommended that you consider the guidelines

of the District of Columbia Department of Fire & Emergency Medical Services (D. C. Fire & EMS). The following guidelines, established according to the number of people anticipated at an event, will ensure that appropriate medical coverage is provided throughout the event:

1-1,999

You may rely on 911

2,000 – 9,999

You should have a fixed First Aid site with certified/licensed personnel, who will remain on site throughout the event.

10,000 – 20,000

You should have one fixed First Aid site with certified/licensed personnel who will remain on site throughout the event and a Basic Life Support Ambulance (licensed in the District of Columbia) who will transport patients to an appropriate medical facility.

20,000 – 30,000

You should have one fixed First Aid site with certified/licensed personnel who will remain on site throughout the event, a licensed Basic Life Support Ambulance and a Licensed Advanced Life Support Unit (D. C. Fire & EMS has the only certificate of need to provide on-scene paramedic services in the District of Columbia).

30,000 – 50,000

You should have two fixed First Aid sites with certified/licensed personnel who will remain on site throughout the event, two Basic Life Support Units and one Advanced Life Support Unit (both licensed in the District of Columbia).

50,000 – 60,000

You should have two fixed First Aid sites with certified/licensed personnel who will remain on site throughout the event, two Basic Life Support Units and two Advanced Life Support Units (both licensed in the District of Columbia).

Events exceeding 60,000 participants are required to also have emergency medical services personnel from D. C. Fire & EMS as well as the Department of Health on site for the appropriate provision of first aid and/or emergency medical services.

~~To ensure requirements for the provision of first aid and/or emergency medical services are met,~~
please contact:

Department of Fire & Emergency Medical Services
Emergency Medical Services-Special Events Coordinator
(202) 673-3310

7) **Comfort Facilities:**

If attendance is expected to exceed the capacity of nearby NPS public comfort facilities, or if none exist in or near the requested park area, the Permittee must provide portable, temporary toilets with sufficient capacity to accommodate anticipated attendance. The general guideline is

a minimum of one (1) portable toilet per three hundred (300) people, of which at least twenty percent (20%) must be handicapped accessible. If portable toilets are determined necessary, a copy of the Permittees contract for their provision must be submitted to the Superintendent at least fourteen (14) days in advance of the opening day of the event.

8) Use of Generators:

The Permittee may provide a generator and/or battery or solar operated equipment for electrical power. Generally, all generator re-fueling must take place off of parkland. For larger events, on-site refueling may be permitted, but will only be allowed between the hours of 5:00 am and 8:00 am on dates agreed upon in advance, in writing, by the Permittee and the National Park Service Ranger assigned to your event. No storage of fuels is allowed on National Park Service property.

At a minimum, the following materials must be placed on the ground underneath the generator to protect the underlying surfaces from potential weight and vibration damage and fluid leakage:

- ¾" plywood, or other material as agreed to in advance by the National Park Service
 - Plastic fuel impermeable tarp on the plywood
 - Absorbent material on top of tarp
 - Drip pan under fueling nozzle
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- The Permittee will be responsible for any damage to park resources resulting from the refueling.
 - Load-in of the generators must be coordinated with the National Park Service Ranger assigned to your activity.
 - To reduce the potential for accidental contact, generators must be enclosed with a perimeter security fence at least three (3) feet in height.
 - The spillage of deleterious substances such as engine oil, gasoline, etc. is prohibited. In the event of such an occurrence, the District of Columbia Fire Department, must be called immediately, by dialing the 911 emergency number, followed by a call to United States Park Police dispatch at (202) 619-7310. Corrective action will be taken in accordance with applicable Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Hazardous Material Guidelines.
 - To help eliminate potential safety hazards, mats and/or high-visibility cable and cord protection devices must cover all extension cords and speaker wiring. When used for crossing of roadways or pathways, these devices must meet applicable ADA Standards. All wiring and connectors must be in good condition, of sufficient gauge to accommodate the electrical load of the equipment and must be properly grounded.

9) Delivery of Materials and Parking:

Vehicles may not be driven on turf, or parked on any turf areas, without prior approval of the Superintendent, or other authorized NPS official. Permission may be granted to allow a limited number of vehicles to transport materials and equipment too heavy to hand-carry. No vehicles shall be driven on the turf within 48 hours following substantial rainfall, or if ground is determined by the NPS to be too soft to allow vehicular travel without incurring damage.

The Permittee shall be responsible for contacting the Division of Maintenance, at a contact number that we will provide, prior to beginning any set-up on parkland.

Parking: Parking is usually limited to areas open to the general public. In some cases a limited number of parking permits for vehicles required for logistical support may be obtained from the Division of Park Programs. Requests for parking passes should be addressed during planning meetings, or through the Park Ranger handling your event application.

10) Transportation:

Consistent with long-standing NPS policy, event organizers must address the requirements which their events may impose on public transportation systems and, when events involve very large numbers of visitors or unusual times, ensure that these needs have been coordinated with the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority. This may involve organizers meeting with METRO representatives separately or during your NPS planning meeting. For further guidance, organizers may contact Mr. Clement Nedd at METRO directly by calling (202) 962-1258.

11) Signs and Advertising:

NPS regulations generally prohibit Federal parkland from being used for business solicitation or for the advertisement or promotion of commercial brands, products, and services. As such, no commercial notices and advertisements shall be placed, posted, or distributed at the event. Further, no structures representing commercial products, or models or replications of commercial products or merchandise may be displayed.

Further, consistent with long-standing NPS policy now under Public Law 108-108, Title I, § 145, special event permits will expressly prohibit the erection, placement, or use of structures and signs bearing commercial advertising. However, a permit may be issued that authorizes the recognition of sponsors of special events, if the NPS determines that the size and form of the recognition is consistent with the special nature and sanctity of the National Mall or any other requested park area, and if the lettering or design identifying the sponsor is no larger than one-third the size of the lettering or design identifying the special event. Further, to the maximum extent practicable for such special events, public use of and access to the National Mall and other parkland is not to be restricted.

The Permittee shall submit a sign plan for NPS review and approval. Any request seeking NPS approval for sponsor recognition must be submitted to the NPS at least thirty (30) days prior to the proposed event, and be depicted on the sign plan. If approved by the NPS, sponsor ~~recognition will be authorized within the terms of the special event permit. Authorized sponsor~~ recognition must be in keeping with NPS policy, regulations, and law, and be appropriate to the scale and theme of the special event. Further, the overall size, number, and design of any signs or banners shall be appropriate to the park setting and the lettering or design identifying the sponsor must be no larger than one-third the size of the lettering or design identifying the special event. Signs and banners may not be affixed to existing trees or other NPS facilities or structures.

Soliciting personal information such as names, addresses, telephone numbers, zip codes, etc., or any other such information which may be used for future solicitation or marketing purposes, is strictly prohibited.

- Pay the United States the full value for all negative impacts to the lands or other property of the United States caused by the said person or organization, its representatives, or employees.
- Indemnify, save and hold harmless, and defend the United States against all fines, claims, damages, losses, judgments, and expenses arising out of, or from, any omission or activity of the said person or organization, its representatives, or employees.

State/Local Government Indemnification

The Permittee shall indemnify, save, and hold harmless and defend the United States against all fines, claims, damages, losses, judgments, and expenses arising out of or from any omission or activity of the Permittee, or its employees to the extent allowable under law.

State/Local Government Subcontractors (Liability Insurance Requirement)

To the extent that work undertaken on National Park Service property is performed by other than the Permittees employees, the Permittee shall require such person or corporation to:

- Procure public and employee liability insurance from a responsible company or companies with a minimum limitation of One Million Dollars (\$1,000,000) per person for any one claim, and an aggregated limitation of Three Million Dollars (\$3,000,000) for any number of claims arising from any one incident. The policies shall name the United States as an additional insured, shall specify that the insured shall have no right of subrogation against the United States for payments of any premiums or deductibles due thereunder, and shall specify that the insurance shall be assumed by, be for the account of, and be at the insured's sole risk
- Pay the United States the full value for all negative impacts to the lands or other property of the United States caused by the said person or organization, its representatives, or employees.
- Indemnify, save and hold harmless, and defend the United States against all fines, claims, damages, losses, judgments, and expenses arising out of, or from, any omission or activity of the said person or organization, its representatives, or employees.

The Permittee/sponsor must furnish documented evidence of the above insurance coverage to the Superintendent at least fourteen (14) days in advance of the opening date of the event. Proof of liability coverage shall be in the form of a certificate, policy rider or binder and shall include the United States Government as an additional named insured. If the special event occurs on parkland like the National Mall, which is administered by National Mall & Memorial Parks, the certificate holder will be identified as:

Superintendent
National Park Service
National Mall & Memorial Parks
900 Ohio Drive, S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20024-2000

20) General Timelines and Submittals:

If you have questions or need additional information, please contact the Division of Park Programs at (202) 619-7225 prior to submitting any of the documentation listed below.

At least seventy (70) days before opening day of special event: if applicable:

Application for Temporary Cultural Food Service Vending Permit (Appendix D)

- Proposed Temporary Cultural Food Menu
- Documentation of food handling qualifications
- Written interpretive component explaining cultural significance of menu items

At least thirty (30) days (forty-five (45) days for large events) before opening day of special event:

- Site plan (if applicable)
- Sign plan (if applicable)
- Risk Management Plan (outlining equipment set-up, equipment operation, materials storage and handling, fire protection, property and personnel protection).

At least (14) days before opening day special event:

- Portable toilet contract (if applicable)
- Evidence of liability Insurance coverage
- Cost recovery funds
- W-9 form
- Electronic mail form

At least seven (7) days before beginning of set-up of special event:

- Application for permits for media/photographic coverage (if applicable)
- Contact park representative regarding utility location marking and/or for-fee use of existing park-owned utilities.
- Contact utility company for marking and/or use of non-park owned utilities.

At least forty-eight (48) hours prior to set-up:

- Contact park representative to set up pre-event and post-event walk-through.

Prior to beginning set-up:

- In case of significant rainfall or inclement weather conditions, contact designated park representative to determine site conditions and accessibility.