



CITY OF DETROIT, OFFICE OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

SPECIAL EVENTS APPLICANT GUIDE



Overview

The City of Detroit hopes to help make your special event as successful as possible. This guide was created to help you prepare all the documents you will need for your application based on the specifics of your event.

Never advertise events that are not yet approved. Some events may not be approved because of safety concerns or scheduling conflicts. It is important to wait until the event is formally approved to notify attendees or sell tickets. Any venues used for events must be in compliance with City regulations.

Some events do not require a Special Events Application. Generally, there are two types of events: Special Events and Permitted Events. If you are not sure if your event is a Special Event you can apply through this process and our team will help you determine what approvals are necessary for your event.

Special Event

Special Events are events that require a Special Events Application, city department sign off, and City Council approval.

City of Detroit Special Events are:

- Events with an expected attendance of 300 or more attendees
- Events that require multiple City permits
- Festivals, parades, or carnivals
- Events that involve ticket sales on city property
- Events that involve donations on city property
- Events that involve closure of any right-of-way
- Events that utilize Hart Plaza

A Permitted Event

A permitted event is one that requires a city department permit but does not require a Special Events Application or City Council sign off.

City of Detroit Permitted Events are:

- Events with an expected attendance of 299 or fewer attendees
- Events that require one or fewer city permits
- Events that do not involve ticket sales on city property
- Events that do not involve donations on city property
- Events on city property

A petitioner (the person who is applying for the event) must complete the Special Event Application in full and submit **60 days** prior to the event. Applications **will not**

be accepted by the Office of Special Events under 60 days. Remember, DO NOT advertise your event until it is approved.

Upon submittal, all City of Detroit Departments providing services and permits for the event will review the application. Petitioners will be contacted to provide additional information or meet with city departments if needed.

Please be aware each facet of your event is subject to change based on Public Health and Safety standards by the City of Detroit in respect to availability of services and scheduling of other events. ALL applications are subject to denial.

	Special Events	Permitted Events
Requires Special Event Application	X	
Requires Approval from Detroit City Council	X	
Requires City Permit(s)	X	X
Event Type	Bike Race and/or Ride Carnival Circus Concert Demonstrations Fireworks Marathon Outdoor Festival Performance Political Ceremony Rally Sports or Recreational Activity Street Fair Walkathon	Residential Block Parties Private Invitation-Only Events

Fees

You will be charged applicable event fees by each City department. Fees will be calculated based on the scale of your event and the elements you plan to include. The Special Events office will be adding more information about fees and fee estimations in the coming weeks.

Application Requirements

Below are general guidelines for what your event may need before, during, and after you apply through the Special Events Application. Please keep in mind this is a basic overview of requirements – you may be required to complete or provide other materials based on the specifics of your event.

It is important to remember that once your event is approved by City Council, you are NOT finished! You must complete all applicable permit applications, pay any invoices, schedule any necessary inspections, and complete any other requirements.

Guideline	Requirement	Submitted with Special Event Application?
Will your event have less than 500 attendees?	Security Plan	Yes
Will your event have over 500 people?	Emergency Response Plan & Emergency Medical Procedures	Yes
	Communication and Community Impact Plan	Yes
Will your event have over 1000 people?	Maintaining of Traffic Plan	Yes
Does your event take place on any city property?	Event Clean Up Plan	Yes
If you are closing any part of a street, ally, or sidewalk, will your event follow a certain route?	Maintaining of Traffic Plan (including turn by turn Route Description)	Yes
Will you be closing any part of a street, ally, or sidewalk without erecting any structures (i.e. tents, bleachers, etc.)?	Occupy the Right of Way Permit	Apply around the same time
	Maintaining of Traffic Plan	Yes

Example: A walk or run that will block off streets but does not require any tents. Vehicle display – placing a vehicle on the sidewalk		
Will you be closing any part of a street, ally, or sidewalk AND erecting any structures?	Right of Way (ROW) Permit	Apply around the same time
	Maintaining of Traffic Plan	Yes
Will you be closing a state highway?	Closure Permit from the Michigan Department of Transportation	Apply after application is submitted
Will your event have things that are built or put up?	Build and Breakdown Schedule	Yes
Will your event include: - Temporary structures, - Food trucks, - Installations, - Or other special hazards?	Site Map Plan (you'll also need this for your temporary use permit)	Yes
Are you using a tent that is larger than 10 x 10? (Anything smaller does not require a permit.)	Follow all DFD Tent Requirements	N/A
	Temporary Use Permit Process - Tent	Apply after application is submitted
Will you be using any generators to provide power?	Temporary Use Permit Process - Generator & Trade Permits	Apply after application is submitted
Will your event include the sale or consumption of liquor?	See Liquor License section below	Apply after application is approved
	Security Contractor Agreement	Yes
Will your event involve food trucks or mobile food units?	Special Transitory Food Unit / Mobile Units Inspection if requested by Health Department or Food Unit	Submit as soon as food vendors are finalized
	List of Food Vendors (and license numbers)	Submit as soon as food vendors are finalized

	All food trucks that use fuel-fired cooking equipment shall obtain a Fire Permit from the Detroit Fire Marshal Division Fire Prevention Section	Submit as soon as food vendors are finalized
Will you be serving food (besides Food Trucks) at your event? This includes serving ice in drinks.	Temporary Food Event License	Apply after application is submitted
	List of Food Vendors (and license numbers)	Submit as soon as food vendors are finalized
Will your event have vendors?	List of Non-Food Vendors	Submit as soon as vendors are finalized
Will your event take place at Hart Plaza or Spirit Plaza?	GSD Application for Special Event Locations	Apply around the same time
	Site Map Plan	Yes
Will your event take place at a park?	Park Permit through Community Pass	Apply around the same time
Will your event involve road closures along Woodward or any work within 50 feet of the right of way?	QLine Track Access Permit (TAP) Application	Apply around the same time
Will your event impact parking meter spaces?	Parking Meter Spaces Application	Complete once application is approved
Will you be contracting Emergency Medical Services?	Emergency Medical Contractor Agreement	Yes
Will you be contracting sanitation services?	Sanitation Contractor Agreement	Yes
Will you be contracting port-a-john restrooms?	Port-a-john Contractor Agreement	Yes

Will you be contracting out security services?	Security Contractor Agreement	Yes
Will your event require barricades?	Barricades Provider Agreement (the City of Detroit does not provide barricades)	Yes
Will your event include any of the following? (These are typically rare) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Childcare - People staying overnight - Petting Zoo - Body Art (such as tattoos) - Temporary cell phone towers (a.k.a. COW's) 	Childcare License Campground License Petting Zoo State issued Body Art Temporary License Site review by Wireless Telecommunications Site Review Committee (WTSRC)	Apply after application is submitted

Security Plan

The goal of a successful contingency plan is not only to protect life and property by identifying the risks associated with an event, but to also develop a plan of action to minimize those risks and address the safety requirements of the participants and spectators. Event organizers should take into consideration the scope of the event, the potential risk of injury or illness to participants and spectators, security needs and emergency support required to help promote a safe and enjoyable event.

Should a natural or man-made disaster occur, the event organizer(s) is legally and morally obligated to ensure that the necessary and appropriate actions will be taken to minimize harm. The Detroit Police Department stands ready to work with you to ensure that the necessary resources and personnel are available to help make your event successful.

Please submit a general security plan stating what you plan to do in the case of an emergency. The Detroit Police Department and Detroit Emergency Medical Service Department will provide additional requirements based on the uniqueness of your event.

If your event will have over 500 attendees, this information should be covered in your Emergency Response Plan and a separate Security Plan is not necessary.

Emergency Response Plan & Emergency Medical Procedures

Emergency Response Plan

The goal of a successful contingency plan is not only to protect life and property by identifying the risks associated with an event, but to also develop a plan of action to minimize those risks and address the safety requirements of the participants and spectators. Event organizers should take into consideration the scope of the event, the potential risk of injury or illness to participants and spectators, security needs and emergency support required to help promote a safe and enjoyable event.

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Your plan should include plans for emergency situations including, but not limited to:

- Inclement weather
- Active shooter
- Lost child

Emergency Medical Procedures

Your plan should also include emergency medical procedures and services that meet the minimum staffing requirements as determined by the AHJ. (see chart below)

In order to ensure adequate care for medical emergencies, the matrix below is utilized by the Detroit Fire Department to determine types of medical resources at an event. Events with an estimated attendance of greater than 500 people or requiring specialized permits and/or plans below 500 attendees may require medical coverage.

EVENT TYPE	CROWD SIZE (anticipated)	CPR / AED / 9-1-1 ACCESS	FIRST AID	BLS or ALS AMBULANCE	Mobile Teams
CONCERT / MUSIC FESTIVAL	500 TO 2499	X			
	2,500-15,500	X		X	
	15,500-50,000	X	X	X	X

	Over 50,000	X	X	X	X
ATHLETIC / SPORTING EVENT	500 TO 2499	X			
	2,500-15,500	X	X	X	X
	15,500-50,000	X	X	X	X
	Over 50,000	X	X	X	X
PARADE* / BLOCK PARTY / STREET FAIR / OUTSIDE VENUE	500 TO 2499	X			
	2,500-15,500	X			X
	15,500-50,000	X	X	X	X
	Over 50,000	X	X	X	X
CONFERENCE / CONVENTION	500 TO 2,500	X			
	2,500-15,500	X			
	15,500-50,000	X	X	X	X
	Over 50,000	X	X	X	X

Examples of emergency plans and procedures are generally available online. [Here is Sample Emergency Plans from the State of Michigan's website](#). Please ensure any plans submitted are specific to your event, not general guidelines.

Communication and Community Impact Plan

To ensure the safety of the event participants and the community, it is the responsibility of the event organizers to arrange notification to businesses and residents in the area immediately surrounding the event site. This communication should include details about the event such as dates and times they will likely be impacted by the flow of traffic, people, etc. This should be specific to your event and consider how your event will affect surrounding communities.

You should include the answers to the following questions in your plan:

- How will your event impact the surrounding community (I.e. pedestrian traffic, sound carryover, safety, etc.)?
- What local groups / businesses have approved your event?
- Indicate what steps you have or will take to notify surrounding communities of your event

Event Clean Up Plan

Clean-up following the event is the responsibility of the applicant. Your cleanup plan should detail how you plan to ensure the public areas you use will be cleaned up properly. You will also be asked to provide the name of the sanitation company (if applicable) as well as a contract of services provided by said company to ensure the event site will be returned to its original state.

The City of Detroit encourages all events to be more environmentally friendly by reducing the amount of waste sent to the landfill. Please review the [City of Detroit Event Waste Reduction Guidebook](#) which will help you design your waste reduction program, answer your questions, and provide you with the knowledge to be successful and environmentally friendly in your cleanup plan.

Right of Way Permits

A Right of Way (ROW) permit is required for any event that will use a portion of a street, ally, or sidewalk. This includes the closing of an entire street or designation of curb lanes for special parking / no parking. Permit costs may vary. Upon receipt of your application, the City Engineering Department will consider the emergency vehicle access, parking, and traffic congestion when approving your application.

Applicants are responsible for closing the street with proper barricades and clear, concise signage for traffic detours. The City of Detroit requires a "Type 3" barrier for all closures and does not provide barricades.

You can find more information and apply for ROW permits through the Department of Public Works (DPW) [here](#).

Unless highly necessary, it is best practice to avoid using streets that include transit routes and to avoid using Woodward Avenue to the best of your ability. This will help city departments essential service to community members.

Parking Meter Spaces Application

If you plan to close any parking spaces, parking meters must be rented for the time that the curb lane will be blocked from public parking.

You can learn more, complete the application, and submit payment by contacting the Municipal Parking Department (MPD):

washingtonbr@detroitmi.gov
313-221-2541

maddoxs@detroitmi.gov
313-221-2520

Maintaining of Traffic Plan

Your Maintaining of Traffic Plan should include a written list of all street closures and a map showing closures. It should also detail any detours and/or alternate routes to ensure traffic is still able to flow. A map attachment is mandatory.

If your event will follow a certain route (for example, a walk or parade), please provide a text and turn-by-turn description of your route from the route start point to end point. The wording should utilize cardinal directions (N, S, E, W) as well as street names. A map attachment of your route is mandatory.

As part of your application, please include the name of the traffic control company you are hiring for managing closures / detours (if applicable) along with the detailed plan of where the barricades and signage will be placed.

Closure Permit from the Michigan Department of Transportation

Some streets are state highways overseen by the Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) and require a closure permit from MDOT. Closing any interstate on / off ramp requires a permit from MDOT. You will be responsible for hiring a traffic control company to manage the closure.

Build and Breakdown Schedule

Please provide a detailed schedule of when and how things will be erected before your event and when and how they will be broken down after your event.

Site Map Plan

Please include a site map that indicates:

- Public entrances and exits
- Location of tents and canopies
- Location of all temporary structures
- Locations of merchandising booths
- Location of food booths and / or food trucks
- Location of garbage receptacles
- Location of beverage booths
- Location of sound stages
- Location of handwashing sinks
- Location of portable restrooms
- Location of First Aid
- Location of fire lanes

- Location of bleachers
- Location of press area
- Any special hazards associated with said event (temporary installations of combustible/flammable liquids shall be identified on the site map)

If you plan to have tents, your site plan must include:

- Location of the tent(s) in relation to the property lines and building(s)
- The means of egress (exits) and exit path(s) to the street, alley, or public way for the tent and for any building affected by an erected tent
- Exit signs, emergency lights, doors and any HVAC for the tent shall be shown on the plans upon application submittal

Tent Permit

Tents should not be erected before obtaining a tent permit and should not be operated or occupied prior to inspection and formal approval by the Fire Safety Unit inspector.

Formal approval will be issued in the form of a "Certificate of Inspection" signed and dated by the Fire Safety Unit inspector and an "Occupancy Load Placard" indicating the maximum number of persons allowed in the tent. Both documents shall be posted in a conspicuous, protected location.

It shall be the responsibility of the applicant to ensure that the tent is being operated and maintained in load. Failure to operate and maintain the tent in accordance with the permit requirements may result in immediate closure, revocation of the "Certificate of Inspection", fines, and / or other legal actions by the City of Detroit.

For specific fire safety questions regarding tents, such as exits, occupant loads, exit signs, emergency lighting, fire extinguishers, exit doors, hardware, or other considerations, contact the Detroit Fire Department – Fire Inspection Unit.

Detroit Fire Marshal Division Contact Information

Fire Marshal Division Plan Review Section:
(313) 596-2966 or (313) 596-2798 (Plan Review submittals)

Fire Marshal Division Fire Prevention Section:
(313) 596-2954 (Inspections)
(313) 596-2932 (Public Assembly Unit)

Email: DFDFMDGeneral@detroitmi.gov

Temporary Use Permit

Items such as tents, generators, and others, will require a Temporary use permit from Building Safety, Environment, and Engineering (BSEED). [The application can be completed online here.](#)

An inspector from the Building, Safety, Engineering, and Environmental Department will be onsite to inspect prior to the event when necessary. If a problem is found it must be corrected immediately or the City reserves the right to shut down your event.

Liquor License Requirements

For the sale or consumption of liquor, wine, or spirits at an event a Liquor License must be obtained from the State of Michigan through the Detroit Police Department (DPD), the Detroit Fire Department (DFD) and Building Safety, Environment, and Engineering (BSEED). The licensing process can take up to one month.

Applications for a Liquor License for an event that will not be held in an establishment which already holds a liquor license may only be completed by a non-profit organization.

Applicants must first ensure that other necessary permits for the event are in order and that the event has been approved by City Council. Events that require a 24-hour Liquor License must then contact the DFD to set up and complete payment for an inspection on or near the event date. Events requiring 24-hour liquor licensing approval shall contact (313) 596-2963 to arrange payment for said approval and an inspection shall be scheduled ahead of the event.

Once the applicant has a DFD receipt for payment for an inspection indicating that DFD is aware of the event and that an inspection is scheduled, the applicant will need to gather and prepare materials to submit to DPD. Applicants must complete the [State of Michigan Non-Profit Special License Application](#) and provide the receipt of payment for an inspection from DFD. If the non-profit listed on the application is new, the Articles of Incorporation and the non-profit Bylaws must also be attached. These materials should be submitted to DPD along with a \$100 liquor license processing fee.

Once DPD has processed the application, they will notify the applicant that materials are ready for pick-up. The applicant will then submit the completed application, showing local government approval, to the State of Michigan. The State of Michigan must receive your request 10 days prior to the date of the event, but in order to avoid delays an application should be submitted well in advance.

Once approved, it is mandatory to submit a copy of the temporary Liquor License from the State of Michigan to the Business Licensing Department within BSEED to also receive a Temporary Liquor License permit from the City of Detroit.

Contacts:

DFD: 313-596-2963, firepermits@detroitmi.gov

DPD: 313-596-1954, liquorlicense@detroitmi.gov

Food Trucks

All food trucks or mobile food vendors should be licensed. Inspections of Special Transitory Food Units or Mobile Food Units are at the request of the Detroit Health Department or at the request of the Food Unit.

All food trucks that use fuel-fired cooking equipment must have obtained a Fire Permit from the Detroit Fire Marshal Division Fire Prevention Section.

List of Food Vendors

As soon as is possible, once food vendors are finalized, please provide the vendor names and license numbers to the Detroit Health Department (DHD).

List of Non-Food Vendors

If your event will have any additional vendors, besides food vendors, please provide a complete list.

Serving Food

If you will be serving food through means other than food trucks or mobile food units at your event, you will need a Temporary Food Event License. You can find more information and the application [here](#).

As a reminder, you will need a container for wastewater should it be applicable to your event.

Rare Circumstances

Campground License – if your event will include attendees staying overnight you will need to apply for a Campground License, contact the Detroit Health Department

Petting Zoo – if your event will include a petting zoo of any kind, please contact the Detroit Health Department to ensure you are in compliance

Body Art Temporary License - This is issued by the state of Michigan and should be applied for on the State website

Childcare License – if your event will include childcare you will need to apply for a Childcare License, contact the Detroit Health Department

Site Review by WTSRC – if your event will include temporary cell phone towers (a.k.a. COW's) you will need a site review by Wireless Telecommunications Site Review Committee (WTSRC)

Barricades Provider Agreement

The City of Detroit does not provide barricades. Please provide a copy of the vendor agreement.

Hart or Spirit Plaza Application

The applications to hold events at Hart Plaza or Spirit Plaza are located [here](#).

Park Permit

Park Permits may be obtained through Community Pass, [here](#).

QLine Track Access Permit (TAP) Application

If your event comes within 50 feet of the QLine track along Woodward it is important that the QLine team is aware. Please contact the M1Rail QLine for a TAP permit [here](#).

Port-a-john Agreement

The requirement for portable restrooms is 1 per 100 attendees. One handwash station is required per every 4-5 port-a-johns.

Please provide a copy of the vendor agreement.

Emergency Medical Contractor Agreement

Please provide a copy of the vendor agreement.

Sanitation Contractor Agreement

Please provide a copy of the vendor agreement.

Security Contractor Agreement

Please provide a copy of the vendor agreement.