



Non-Profit/Charitable Special Event Guidelines for City of Toronto Parks and Trails

Please be advised that we require a minimum of 8 weeks' notice for special event requests in City parks. Applications received with less than 8 weeks' notice will not be considered.

A non-refundable administrative fee will be applied to all event booking applications.

Cancellations must be received 3 weeks prior to the booking start date and will be subject to an additional cancellation fee.

Once the application is received and reviewed by City Staff, the client will be sent a conditional letter of approval no later than 30 days prior to the event date. This will outline all the details of the event that have been approved and what requirements must be met before final approval is granted.

It is recommended the **event not be advertised** until conditional approval has been granted by the City of Toronto.

Criteria

Events hosted by not-for-profit/charitable organizations are required to be non-profit, non-promotional and open to the general public to attend free of charge. Events are not permitted to be private or contained for the purpose of charging an admission to the event.

Eligible Event Organizations

- 1) Permits may be issued by the General Manager of Parks, Forestry and Recreation to Special Event Organizations to hold events in City Parks that meet one or more of the following criteria:
 - a) Events organized and conducted by Parks, Forestry and Recreation
 - b) Recreation programs or events sponsored by community non-profit groups
 - c) Community Service programs or events local in nature which provide a benefit to residents of the city of Toronto
 - d) Local non-profit recreation activities conducted under the auspices of outside sponsorship of non-profit organizations
 - e) Meetings or gatherings respecting community issues
 - f) Non-profit, charitable entities which provide a service of benefit to residents of the City of Toronto

We reserve the right to request proof of not for profit and/or charitable status, such as letters patent or a registered charitable donation number. This may also include financial statements.

- 2) Permits shall not be issued by the General Manager of Parks, Forestry and Recreation to special event organizations as follows:
 - a) Any for-profit or for-promotion organization and/or group
 - b) Any non-resident, non-recreational group, which does not provide a service to the citizens of the City of Toronto
 - c) Commercial groups or commercial business using facilities for any purpose

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Policies and Procedures

Please be advised applicants requesting permission to hold a special event in a City of Toronto park will be required to meet the following conditions prior to the issuance of the final permit:

Insurance

A Certificate of Insurance naming the City of Toronto as an additional insured in the amount of \$2,000,000.00 is mandatory for all special events. If the event attendance exceeds 3,000 and/or includes the sale/service of alcohol, the liability insurance coverage is required to be a minimum of \$5,000,000.00.

Portable Washroom Facilities

Large festivals and events may be required to provide portable washroom facilities and a hand-washing station, to meet event participant washroom needs. If only one portable toilet is being installed, it is recommended that the larger, accessible unit should be selected and barrier-free path of travel shall be provided. Portable washrooms are required for all alcohol related events. Park sites that do not have permanent washrooms, may require the permit holder to provide an adequate number of portable toilets for the duration of the special event to accommodate planned number of attendants.

The number and location of portable washrooms will be determined in consultation with the Park Supervisor during an arranged site meeting.

Please note: washroom facilities in outdoor City Parks are open from May to October.

Parks Deliveries & Supplies

Parks does not supply waste containers, garbage bags, picnic tables, tables, chairs, barricades, snow fencing, portable washrooms, and other such amenities. This is the responsibility of the special event client to coordinate such items with private enterprises, after confirming viability with the Park Supervisor and Customer Service. Clients must notify Parks and Client Services of all deliveries requirements and receive prior approval to deliver.

Damage Deposit

A damage deposit may be requested prior to the event, due to the nature of the event or for requests exceeding 200 people. The deposit will be held to ensure that any damage to park(s) will be satisfactorily repaired. The deposit amount will be determined by the Park Supervisor.

Labour Charges

The client will be required to pay any overtime costs that may incur during the event.

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Installation of Structures

With respect to the tent, stage or feature you propose to install in the park, your organization may be required to obtain the necessary permit from Toronto Building. For further information and to obtain the necessary building permit(s), please contact Toronto Building's City-wide Customer Service Request Line 416-397-5330 or visit the City of Toronto's [Tents and Temporary Structures webpage](#).

Please provide this division with written confirmation from Toronto Building if no permit(s) are required. A copy of the certificate of insurance from the company supplying the structure may be required.

Building Permits issued by Toronto Building are required for:

- Tent covers more than 60 metres squared (646 square feet)
- Groups of tents spaced closer than 3.0 metres from each other exceeding 60 square metres (108 square feet) in combined area
- Stages exceeding 600 millimetres above adjacent ground level, greater than 10 square metres (108 square feet) in stage/platform area

Please note: Building permits are not required for mobile stages

Stakeouts

Any installation of a tent, fencing or any non-freestanding structure, which requires staking/pegging of the grounds, will be required to contact [Ontario One Call](#), 30 days prior to the event at 1-800-400-2255 and Parks, Forestry and Recreation Technical Services.

Sale or Service of Food and Non-Alcoholic Beverages

The sale or service of food and/or non-alcoholic beverages at the event will be required to contact, [Toronto Public Health – Food Safety at Special Events](#)

Please note: Public Health Division requires a minimum of 30 days' notice to process all requests.

Sale or Service of Alcoholic Beverages

If alcoholic beverages are sold/served the client must ensure the compliance of the City of Toronto Municipal Alcohol Policy (MAP). Please refer to the City of Toronto [Municipal Alcohol Policy](#).

Approval to serve/sell alcohol is given subject to your organization applying and receiving the necessary Special Occasion Permit (S.O.P.) Special Occasion Permit from the [Alcohol and Gaming Commission of Ontario](#). S.O.P. applications can be obtained at your local L.C.B.O store or the referenced link. Any person(s) serving alcohol at the event must have Smart Serve Training and be certified. The applicant is required to provide Parks, Forestry and Recreation with proof of Smart Served Certification of all servers. Prior to receiving the necessary permit from Parks, Forestry and Recreation authorizing this activity, it will be necessary to show proof that the required Liquor License has been obtained.

Food (not snacks) must be available for sale in the beer garden and 35% of the alcohol menu must include low alcohol and non-alcoholic drink choices.

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The following signs are required to be posted in a prominent location at the Beer Garden:

- A sign naming the Special Occasion Permit holder
- A "do not drink and drive" sign
- A sign stating that "it is harmful for pregnant women to consume alcoholic beverages"
- A sign stating that "it is illegal to serve alcohol to minors, intoxicated patrons or to the point of intoxication"

Event Supervision & Security

At the discretion of City staff, professional security services and/or paid-duty police may be required at the Event or at Access Points of licensed bar areas, at the Event Organizer's expense. Please note; these event staff must be smart served trained to monitor access and supervise the interior of the beer garden. Please refer to the Municipal Alcohol Policy for further information on the roles and responsibilities of event staff.

Outdoor licensed bar areas must be clearly defined and separated from unlicensed areas by a physical barrier with a **minimum** height of 0.9 metres (36 inches).

Last call for the serving/selling of alcohol is 30 minutes prior to the conclusion of the permitted time.

Event Consultation/City Staff

Parks, Forestry & Recreation staff, in consultation with the Event Organizer, will provide approximations for the determined number of Event Workers required for each Event. The nature (e.g. private versus public) and location (e.g. indoors versus outdoors) of the Event, the expected attendance, and if applicable, the type of bar operation (e.g. open bar versus cash bar) and number and size of outdoor licensed bar areas operated in conjunction with the Event will have an impact on the number of Event Workers required.

The below table provides a suggested ratio of Event Workers according to the number of Event participants. This is intended as a guide only. The City reserves the right to adjust the minimum Event Worker to guest ratio on an Event-by-Event basis.

Number of event participants	Minimum number of bartenders	Minimum number of floor monitors	Minimum number of door monitors (per event access point)	Minimum number of ticket sellers
Under 25	1	0	1	0
25 to 49	1	1	1	1
50 to 99	2	1	2	1
100 to 199	2	2	2	2

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Number of event participants	Minimum number of bartenders	Minimum number of floor monitors	Minimum number of door monitors (per event access point)	Minimum number of ticket sellers
200 +	2 + 1 for every additional 200 event participants	2 + 1 for every additional 200 event participants	2 + 1 for every additional 200 event participants	2 + 1 for every additional 200 event participants

Please note: events with an attendance of 5,000 or greater will be required to provide the AGCO with a 60 day notification.

Use of Sound Amplification or Music

Noise Exemptions

As the City of Toronto Noise Bylaw provides sound level standards for amplified sounds, noise exemption permits will be required for any type of amplified sounds to ensure compliance with the bylaw. These may include, but is not limited to, live entertainment, festivals, concerts, or the use of loud speakers.

In order to apply for a Noise Exemption Permit, please visit the [Noise Exemption Permit page](#), which describes the steps necessary to apply.

Please note a minimum of 4 weeks' notice is required. In accordance with the approval process, Municipal Licensing and Standards (ML&S), provides notice, in writing, to the local Ward Councillor(s) where the event or activity is to be held. The Councillor(s) has 14 days to review and respond to the notice. Any conditions imposed on the Noise Exemption Permit must be followed.

An approved noise exemption permit DOES NOT constitute valid permit use of parkland space.

Electrical Access

Electrical access is not guaranteed with park events. It is strongly recommended that all groups provide their own portable generator(s) as all parks do not have access to electrical power. It is the responsibility of the applicant to contact the Park Supervisor, prior to the event, to confirm if electrical access is available. Please be advised charges for electrical access will apply.

All portable generators used during the event are required to be sectioned off from event participants and the general public. All exposed electrical wiring must be covered by rubber matting for safety purposes. Please contact Electrical Safety Authority (ESA) at 1-877-372-7233 to obtain the necessary approvals.

Amusement Rides/Inflatables

Organizations planning to have amusement rides and inflatables, will require the following:

- a) Certificate of Liability Insurance from the company supplying the rides, listing the City of Toronto as an additional insured

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- b) A copy of a valid Technical Safety and Standard Authority (TSSA) Amusement Device Mechanics Certificate for each ride/inflatable present at the event
- c) Amusement rides will only be allowed on hard surfaces in parks and not on any grassy areas. Approval for amusement rides will be at the discretion of the Park Supervisor.

Hot Air Balloons

Exemption is required.

Organizations interested in hosting an event with a Hot Air Balloon will be required to provide a request in writing to the Parks, Forestry and Recreation Customer Service Manager. Requests will be considered on a case by case basis.

If approval is provided it will be contingent on the conditions below;

Hot Air Balloon Rides

For organizations planning to include hot air balloon rides, the following conditions must be met:

- a) Certificate of Insurance from the company supplying the balloon rides with the City of Toronto named as additionally insured (\$5,000,000)
- b) Where the balloon is used for rides we will require a copy of the 'special flight operation certificate' issued by Transport Canada (this should also specify the type of balloon being operated)
- c) The balloon must be tethered at all times and at a distance from the ground no greater than 50 feet
- d) The hot air balloon must not operate at wind speed greater than 17 kilometres per hour
- e) No more than 2 people are permitted to be inside the balloon at any time
- f) That all participants sign a "Release, Waiver and Indemnity" form
- g) A set fee cannot be charged for the hot air balloon rides. A donation can be requested from participants

Raffles

Draws or auctions may require a license with events. Please contact the [Lottery Licences – City of Toronto](#) to determine if a license is required.

Parking

Reserved parking is not provided for Special Events in City Parks. All unauthorized vehicles on parklands will be tagged and/or towed at the owner's expense.

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Animals

Animals with Events (By-Law)

- a) The Company supplying the animals must be registered with an organization called Canadian Zoos and Aquariums (CAZA) and must be insured. Toronto Animal Services must receive a copy of CAZA accreditation as well as paperwork regarding insurance.
- b) There must be an educational component attached and on display. For example, a handout stating the age, size, weight etc. Education Program is defined as follows:
 - a. Education: Imparting information and knowledge
 - b. Program: The following aspects or elements are to be present.
 - i. The live animal as indicated under Municipal Code 349, Schedule A
 - ii. Printed material conveying information about the animal and its role in nature
 - iii. Knowledgeable persons on scene who can give verbal presentations to the public

There is to be no evidence of an entertainment purpose for any of the animals involved.

- c) Approval from Toronto Animal Service will be required and only the use of animals in conjunction with an event will be approved if all above mentioned elements (CAZA Accreditation & Education Program) were in place.

Balloons

Balloons are prohibited in City of Toronto Parks. They are not permitted to be released, handed out or displayed in conjunction with the event. Broken balloon pieces are harmful to the park's wildlife and the environment.

Fireworks

Fireworks can only be discharged under the provisions of the by-law which sets out conditions and safety regulations. [Fireworks – City of Toronto](#)

To discharge fireworks under special occasions, you must receive a permit from the Fire Chief through Toronto Fire Services for a Special Occasions Fireworks Discharge Permit. To request a permit, contact tfs_events@toronto.ca or 416-338-8783.

Please note: that many city venues, such as civic squares and parks, prohibit the use of fireworks and/or open flame.

Waste Management

Please be advised that your organization is responsible for the clean-up, collection and removal of all litter and recycled materials from the park during and post event. Failure to restore the park to its original condition may result in cancellation of future permits and additional park fees.

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Please note, to comply with City Council's Waste Diversion Policy, the person(s) and/or organization(s) signing this application must agree to recycle all waste generated by their event, and provide in advance a waste diversion plan. Please complete a [Waste Management Form](#)

First Aid

Toronto Paramedic Services (TPS) can be contacted to provide first aid at the event. For more information, visit the City of Toronto's [About Emergency Services – City of Toronto](#)

Fundraising

Selling items is permitted only in support of non-profit or charitable organizations. Selling or distributing items requires written authorization on the Permit.

Parade/Procession Permit

If the event includes a parade or procession on City streets, please contact [Toronto Police by email](#) to obtain approval.

Open Fires

Approval for open fires in parks are subject to approval from the City of Toronto Fire Division and the Park Supervisor.

Sale or Distribution of Merchandise and Publications

The selling and/or distribution merchandise or promotional materials are permitted only in support of non-profit or charitable organizations. Selling or distributing items requires written authorization on the permit. You will be required to provide this division with a complete list of vendors that propose to sell merchandise at your event.

Movie Nights

Movie screening in the park requires the applicant to obtain licensing and is not permitted without the necessary copyrights. This includes personally owned movies, DVDs, etc. A copy of the certificate of insurance from the company supplying the movie screen will be required.

Security

Event organizers may be responsible for making arrangements for crowd control, ensuring safety at all times and overseeing specified areas of the event. This may include the hiring of Police Officers, Professional Licenced Security and/or Parks By-Law Officers.

The City of Toronto is not responsible for any materials left in the park overnight for the duration of your event. The applicant will be required to have overnight security stationed in the park to secure deliveries, drop offs and event materials. This includes, but is not limited to, portable washrooms and stages.

Emergency Action Plan (EAP)

All special events are now required to provide an Emergency Action Plan (EAP) for each event. Groups must submit an EAP at least 8 weeks in advance or 60 days prior to the event date. [Complete and submit the plan online](#) for screening.

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Events Must Remain Non Partisan

All events in City of Toronto facilities **during an election year** are required to remain non-partisan. Groups are not permitted to post signs and or hand out political and/or campaign material during the event. This includes **all three levels of government**. For further information on Election Year Policies, review the City of Toronto's webpage for [Use of City Resources During an Election Period Policy](#).

Cannabis & City Partnerships Statement

The federal government's Cannabis Act essentially bans all cannabis and related companies (whether they be producers, distributors, accessory providers, etc.) from sponsoring persons, entities, events, activities or facilities. Furthermore, such companies are banned from displaying their names on any sports or cultural venues.

The statute generally mirrors the federal Tobacco Act which largely restricts the promotion of tobacco products. Like the Tobacco Act, the Cannabis Act prohibits promotion by means of a testimonial or endorsement, false or misleading advertising, sponsorship promotion, lifestyle advertising (which evokes images of glamour, excitement and risk) and advertising appealing to young people.

Accordingly, in line with the legislation, [City Divisions and Agencies will not entertain any advertising or sponsorship proposals](#) (including offers to raise awareness or educate the public about cannabis) from any cannabis or cannabis-related businesses for any City-owned property, space or asset (including parks, squares, community centres, events, etc.).

Other

Any action which could incite violence is prohibited.

Please note the City of Toronto reserves the right to cancel any special events should the park/trails be deemed dangerous or unsafe for use. Failure to comply with the applicable guidelines will result in the cancellation of any current and future requests.

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Special Events Vehicle Policy

This policy is subject to approval from the Park Supervisor.

Vehicles are not permitted to be driven and/or parked on parklands. Any required vehicle access to parklands for the purpose of drop offs and/or deliveries will need Park Supervisor approval. Vehicles that are parked on parklands will be tagged and towed at the owner's expense.

For the purpose of delivering and picking up equipment, a maximum of three vehicles at a time is permitted at each site. This limit is applicable only to those sites where this number of vehicles may be reasonably accommodated.

Permission for these vehicles to enter the parks is given with the following understanding:

- That at the speed of the vehicle(s) is not to exceed 10 km/hour while driving through the park;
- That the vehicle(s), while driving through the park, will be escorted by a pedestrian preceding the vehicle(s) on foot;
- While in the park the vehicle(s) must have on its four-way flashers;
- Permission for vehicles to park at a site is given on the condition that the area is in suitable condition for such use. In the event of poor or wet conditions, vehicle(s), under any circumstances, are not permitted in the park; and
- Once parked at the designated site, the vehicles are not to be moved elsewhere in the park, other than to leave the park, subject to the conditions noted above.

Drivers of those vehicles entering the parks are reminded that they are to adhere to the directions of Division staff with respect to appropriate routes or parking sites at each location.

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Signage and Sponsor Recognition Guidelines

- 1) Artwork for all signage including text, designs and dimensions must be submitted with the Special Event Application six to eight weeks prior to the date of the event.
- 2) Acceptable signage must meet the following criteria:
 - a) Numbers and locations of the signs must be proposed as part of the Special Event Application and approved in advance of the event for inclusion on the Special Event Permit, maximum number of signs permitted to be determined based on scale of event, size of park, site, number of sponsors, etc.
 - b) **Signage**
Temporary non-illuminated advertising devices including pennants, banners and flags, for advertising a fundraising or other event presented by sports/events organizations meeting the criteria under part of this policy. All printed material to be distributed or displayed are subject to prior approval.

No signs can be posted at any times on City trees.
 - c) **Sponsorship**
Non-profit/charity event signage is required to be 80% larger and more prominent than any sponsors signage. The ratio is 80% (event name/signage) to 20% (sponsorship signage). This includes banners, tents, flags, barricades & snow fencing signage.
 - d) **Vehicles**
Permission of display of "Special Event" vans and vehicles: Displaying commercial advertising will be given consideration based on individual merit of each request, within the context of these guidelines and the provision of the Division's Vehicle Regulations for City Park roadways and service drives.
- 3) The display of any tobacco promotion or product identification is strictly prohibited in any city park. The display of any alcohol promotion or product identification (beer or wine) in a City Park is permitted only within the connection of responsible drinking.
- 4) It is prohibited to post, nail, attach, stencil otherwise fasten or erect any poster, sign, notice, banners, place card or other circular, bill or paper in, upon or to any part of any tree or any other vegetation located in any City Park. Posting of signage in any part of a City Park is not permitted unless a written proposal is first formally submitted and approved as per this policy. The staking of signage into the ground is not permitted without this Division's approval.

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Contact Information

Parks/Trail Event Contact Information

Park Special Event Permits Location	Permit Officer	Contact Number
University-Rosedale Toronto-St. Paul's Toronto Centre Toronto-Danforth Don Valley West	Gordon Molto	416-338-2614
Etobicoke North Etobicoke Centre Etobicoke-Lakeshore Parkdale-High Park York South-Weston York Centre Humber River-Black Creek Eglinton-Lawrence Davenport	Gloria Peters	416-338-2572
Beaches-East York Scarborough Southwest Scarborough Centre Scarborough-Agincourt Scarborough North Scarborough-Guildwood Scarborough-Rouge Park	David Craig	416-338-3294
Spadina-Fort York	Stacy Babb	416-338-2609
Don Valley East Don Valley North Willowdale	Nathalie Domagala	416-338-3326
Arts, Music and Movie Nights	Nathalie Domagala	416-338-3326

Other Event Contact Information

Location	Contact Person	Contact Number
Albert Campbell Square	Katheeshan Ramachandran	416-396-7766

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Location	Contact Person	Contact Number
David Pecaut Square	Kristen Kitcher	416-397-9887
Mel Lastman Square	Paul Quinlan	416-395-6011
Nathan Philips Square	Shalini Srivastava	416-395-1304
Yonge Dundas Square	Not applicable	416-979-9960 or email
Union Station (Sir John A. Macdonald Plaza)	Syma Shah	647-338-6816
City Hall, Metro Hall and Toronto Civic Centres	Not applicable	416-397-7220
Toronto Botanical Gardens (Edward Gardens)	Not applicable	416-397-1349
Cloud Gardens	Not applicable	416-392-7288
City of Toronto Stadiums	Fabio Abreu	416-338-3349
Evergreen Brickworks	Not applicable	416-596-1495 Ext. 293
Downsview Park	Not applicable	416-954-0544
Steam Whistle Brewery	Not applicable	416-362-2337 ext 252 or 253
TDSB Permitting	Not applicable	416-395-7666
Garrison Common and Fort York	Erica Poppolo	416-392-7248
Ontario Legislative Grounds (Queen's Park South)	Not applicable	416-325-2900
Community Centre Events	Not applicable	Please call the individual Community Centre directly
Arena Special Events	Not applicable	Please contact your District Permit Officer
Swimming Pool Events	Not applicable	Please contact your District Aquatic Staff
Outdoor Social Gathering (picnic), Wedding Ceremony and Photos	Not applicable	416-396-SERV (7378)