

City of Alexandria
Special Event Permit Guide

This guide provides information about the Special Event Permitting process and related topics of public health and safety for special events held in the City of Alexandria. Further details can be provided by City departments who oversee specific areas of the permitting process and ensure public health and safety.

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Application Timeline and Permit Allocation

The Special Event Permit process is governed by the City of Alexandria’s Special Events Policies and Procedures (Policy). The primary goal of the Policy is to ensure public safety during events in public spaces. Therefore, decisions about permitting events are largely based around issues of public safety.

Special Event Permit Applications are accepted as early as twelve months in advance of the proposed event date. Applications must be correct and complete and have a site plan and/or route map in order to be considered by the Special Events Committee (Committee). The Committee reviews each application and determines if the special event can be permitted. Events are permitted in the order they are received.

Special Event Permitting priority is determined based upon the following criteria:

- 1st Priority Events produced by City of Alexandria departments

- 2nd Priority City of Alexandria Partnerships and Initiatives (City co-sponsored events, PARKnerships, government agencies, local school board), and events that have occurred for multiple consecutive years

- 3rd Priority Events organized to provide benefit to the general public, with all activities and merchandise being free of charge

- 4th Priority Events of primary interest to an organization, private group, or business that do not charge fees for any activities or merchandise

- 5th Priority Events that charge fees of any kind, including merchandise or ticket sells, and generate a profit or fundraising revenue for the event organizer

A non-refundable application fee is required at the time the application and site map are submitted.

Per the Special Events Policy, applications submitted less than 180 days, or six months, in advance may be denied a permit.

Applications and site maps must be complete and accurate to be considered for permitting by the Committee. Changes to event activities, details, or site maps may not be executed by the event organizer without written approval by the Committee. Changes must be approved by the Committee at least 30 days before the event. Changes submitted by the event organizer less than 30 days before the event must not be adopted or implemented by the event organizer without approval of the Committee and may result in increased fees.

Event organizers are expected to reimburse the City 100% of costs the City incurs for the event. Event organizers are provided a cost estimate if their event is approved for permitting by the Committee. This estimate may not reflect the final total billed after the event if the event’s needs change after the estimate has been given.

Event permits may be revoked at any time, including onsite, the day of the event, if it is found during the site inspection that any activities or event set up were not permitted by the Special Events Committee or a public agency, are not in compliance with City Codes, Ordinances, and/or Policies, and/or does not comply with the statements made by the applicant in the event application and site plan.

Special Events are permitted using the following process:

1. Applicant submits a complete Special Event Permit Application and accompanying site map/race route and pays the \$50 application fee.
2. The application and accompanying materials are reviewed by the Special Events Committee at its monthly meeting.
3. The Special Event Permit Manager will then:
 - a. Email the applicant the list of additional permits they need to file for the Special Event and any feedback from the Committee if the event is approved; or
 - b. Email the applicant questions and/or feedback from the Committee and next steps the applicant needs to take for the event to be approved if the event is not approved for permitting.

If the event is approved by the Committee, the applicant must then:

1. Pay any additional fees, such as a deposit and/or turf bond
2. File additional permits, pay related fees, and submit additional materials required to permit the event, such as the Certificate of Liability Insurance

Once these steps are completed, the Special Event Permit will be issued.

If the event is not approved by the Committee, the applicant:

1. Must provide additional information requested by the Committee to the Special Event Permit Manager for the Committee's consideration at its next monthly meeting; and/or
2. May appeal the denial using the appeal process outlined in the Special Event Policy

The Special Events Committee is not responsible for and does not have control over conditions of public and/or private spaces around the event site when the event is scheduled to take place.

Site Plan and Route Map

A site plan is a visual representation of the event. It should identify the location of all equipment used for the event. The site plan should include all permanent features of the site, including structures, streets, emergency lanes, buildings, and other permanent elements. In all cases where an event is fenced or contained, the site plan must be composed to scale, clearly showing all aisles and points of egress. The following list includes what is needed for a complete site map. Other equipment should be added if it is not listed here.

- tents and tent sizes
- fencing/barricades
- banners/signage
- food/beverage vendors
- reserved parking
- light towers
- bounce house/kids' activities
- entry and exit points
- water activities/sports
- area(s) where alcohol will be served
- street closures
- sidewalk closures
- portable restroom facilities
- equipment for wedding ceremonies
- stages
- platforms
- bleachers
- generators
- chairs
- tables

Please include the size of tents and stage dimensions on the site plan.

A route map is required for activities such as races, walks, runs, and cycling events that would occur along streets, sidewalks, trails, and roadways. The route map should include the following:

- temporary property additions
- street closures
- vehicle removal
- names of all streets, trails, and roadways
- if the route is planned for full or rolling closure
- parking closures

Be sure to consider the following when planning to hold an event at a site:

- **Points of Entry/Exit:** How many? Pedestrian or vehicle access? Allow for emergency access? Easily accessible? Well signed?
- **Emergency Routes:** Is there access to all areas by emergency vehicles?
- **Safety of Site:** Are there features of the site that would need to be marked or could pose a risk?
- **Electricity:** Where are the power outlets and generators? Are they accessible for use and contained for safety? Can all lines and power cords be properly covered? What is the height of overhead power lines and where are they located?
- **Central Space:** Is there an obvious, primary gathering area for attendees where event information and first aid are available? Is there enough open space for attendees?
- **Vending Space:** Is the ground level? Is the area prone to drainage or flooding issues? Is there enough room for storage, load-in/out, adequate aisle width?
- **Behind the Scenes:** Where will event management and logistics be located? Are areas properly secured and identified?

- **Parking:** Is there enough vehicle parking within a reasonable distance from the event? Is there handicap parking? Parking for vendors, staff, equipment trailers? Are these areas well signed and staffed?
- **Water Hook-up:** What is the reason for using water at the event? Is the hookup near where water is needed?

Your event has been approved for permitting. What are the next steps?

Per the Special Events Policy, the Special Events Committee decides if the proposed event is approved for permitting, needs more information to determine if the event can be permitted, or the event is not approved for permitting. After the Committee reviews each application, the applicant is notified of the Committee’s decision.

If the event is approved for permitting, the applicant is emailed the list of required permits, estimated cost of the event, and an invoice for 50% earnest deposit of the total estimated costs up to \$40,000. The event organizer must then file and pay for all required permits and the earnest deposit. Depending on the event, an emergency plan, communication plan, equipment delivery schedule, and other supporting documents may be required. The Special Event Permit will not be issued until all supporting documents are on file, other permits have been filed and paid for, and the deposit is paid in full.

Once all permits are filed and paid for, the event organizer must have the following with them at the event:

- Special Event Permit
- site plan and/or route map
- All approved permits
- emergency plan
- emergency contact phone numbers
- first aid kit

If the Committee needs more information about an application and/or the site plan and/or route map, the applicant will be asked to resubmit the materials. The Committee will reconsider the application at its next meeting and notify the applicant of its decision.

The Committee may conditionally approve an application for reasons, such as the event needs to be held on a different date due to other events or City maintenance in the proposed event site, or certain conditions must be met before final approval can be given.

The Committee may deny the application be approved for permitting based upon the provisions of the Policy adopted by City Council.

An applicant may appeal the denial of an application or permit conditions made by the Committee to the City Manager within 30 days of receiving the notice by emailing a written statement to the Special Event Permit Manager. The City Manager or designee shall act upon said appeal promptly, but in no event later than the

date and time of the proposed special event. If the decision to deny the special event permit was made by the City Manager or designee, that decision shall be final.

The event organizer is responsible for emailing copies of permits issued by surrounding jurisdictions and/or State and Federal agencies to the Special Events Permit Manager at least 30 days prior to the event.

RPCA issues ABC Permission, Wedding, Film, and Photography Permits for City Parks, as well as Special Event Permits for the entire City. The City of Alexandria's Permit Center can assist with filing applications for noise/amplified sound, parking, street closures, amusement devices, fire prevention, building, electrical and other permits not issued by RPCA. The Health Department issues permits for food and beverage vendors at events.

Guidelines & Fees for Events in Parks

The RPCA Fee Schedule is updated yearly and published July 1 of each year. It contains current park rental and event related fees.

Park Rental Fees are charged according to which district a park is in and the day and type of event taking place. Fees may be reimbursed if the event is canceled due to inclement weather. If an event organizer cancels the event after the application has been processed and permitted for reasons other than weather, 50% of the fees may be reimbursed, but 100% of the cost of City personnel who arrived to staff the event will be billed to the event organizer. The \$50 application fee is nonrefundable.

Flooding occurs in some City parks, and fees are not reimbursed for flooding. The City is not responsible for damage to equipment or other costs/fees the organizer may lose due to flooding or other natural disasters.

Event organizers must provide the Special Events Permit Manager with an Event Schedule that includes equipment delivery and pickup dates and times. The Schedule must be received by the Special Events Permit Manager at least 30 days before the event date.

Event organizers may not set up equipment before the park rental begins or leave event equipment in the park after the rental ends. All park guidelines apply to events held in parks. Vehicles are not allowed to be driven inside of parks.

Organizers of events in Oronoco Bay Park and Waterfront Park need to have optional event plans in case the park floods. The City is not responsible for damage to event equipment or cancellation of events and/or some of their activities due to flooding in either park.

All lights in City Parks are on sunrise/sunset timers that cannot be changed for events.

Event organizers are responsible for picking up and disposing of all litter and trash created by their event. Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities and Transportation and Environmental Services may require staffing for events to manage collection and disposal of litter/trash. The event organizer is required to pay for these services if it is determined that City staff are needed for refuse collection and/or disposal.

The City of Alexandria does not provide any other event equipment for rent or loan.

The City of Alexandria has ordinances and policies relating to the use of public property and City parks. These ordinances and policies apply to all Special Events in the City, and permits may be issued for some exceptions.

- No littering
- No alcohol or illegal substances
- Enter parks at designated entrances
- No amplified sound unless permitted
- Park in designated areas only
- Boating in designated areas only
- No gambling or panhandling
- Fish in designated areas only
- Swim in designated areas only
- No animals at events unless permitted
- Animals must be on a leash
- Do not damage property or vegetation
- No firearms, including concealed, on public property

Additionally, Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities has department policies and guidelines for use of City parks. Some that directly apply to Special Events are:

- No motorized vehicles in parks
- No scooters in parks
- No bicycles in parks
- Enter parks at designated entrances
- Only beer and wine are allowed in City Parks with proper permits
- No drugs or illegal substances
- Animals may not be on playgrounds
- Animals may not be on sports fields

Noise Permits, Street & Sidewalk Closures, & Reserved Parking

All requested street and sidewalk closures and reserved parking must be shown on the site map submitted with the Special Event Permit Application. Event organizers may not close public rights-of-way without approval of the Special Events Committee and without obtaining the appropriate permits. The event organizer is responsible for paying all associated fees with street and sidewalk closures and reserved parking.

If the event requires street or sidewalk closures, the event will be required to produce and post traffic and/or pedestrian safety equipment as well as proper detour signage at approaching intersections and crosswalks. It is the event organizer’s responsibility to obtain and properly place this equipment prior to the beginning of the event. Street/Sidewalk closure signs must be approved by appropriate City departments. City departments do not rent or loan traffic control signs.

Fire lanes may not be obstructed at any time by an event.

Events with amplified sound must file a noise permit and notify neighborhoods immediately surrounding the event site of the day and time the event is taking place and that there will be amplified sound permitted by the City.

Event organizers will be notified of the permits they need to file after the Special Event Permit application and site plan and/or route map is reviewed by the Committee. Organizers must file and pay for all required permits at least 30 days before the event date. Please keep in mind that some City departments require more than 30 days to file a permit.

Please contact the Permit Center at 703.746.4200 or permit.center@alexandriava.gov for more information.

Tents & Structures

Building Safety and Fire Prevention Permits are required for the construction and placement of any structure, including shelters, platforms, stages, scaffolding, light towers, inflatables and all other structures not otherwise classified as furniture.

A fire prevention permit is required for tents 200 square feet and larger. A fire prevention permit and building permit is required for tents 900 square feet and larger. Flame resistance certificates for tents and structures should match the serial numbers of the tents used on-site at the event.

If the addition of furniture creates a structural addition, such as in planned seating areas where over 50 chairs are provided, a building and fire permit may be required.

Cooking on-site may also require a fire prevention permit for each food vendor.

Event organizers will be notified of the permits they need to file after the Special Event Permit application and site plan and/or route map is reviewed by the Committee. Organizers must file and pay for all required permits at least 30 days before the event date. Please keep in mind that some City departments require more than 30 days to file a permit.

The original copies of all approved permits must be available for review and inspection at the event and kept onsite until the event is over.

Requirements for tents, inflatables, structures:

- No tents, inflatables, or structures may be staked into asphalt or concrete surfaces or any surfaces in City Parks.
- All tents, inflatables, or structures must be secured and anchored by weight at all corners. They may be weighted by water jugs, water barrels, sandbags, or cement blocks.
- No tents, inflatables, or structures may be erected within 15 feet of a structure, fire hydrant, or obstruct any building exit or doorway.
- Tents, inflatables, or structures may not entirely block streets or sidewalks. A minimum of 22 feet clearance width and 13.6 feet overhead height for fire vehicle access must be maintained on all streets.
- Requirement for fire extinguishers

Permit fees are non-refundable and must be paid prior to permits being issued. Applications for all permits must be filed at least 30 days before the event date so that staffing needs can be determined (except for fireworks, which require filing of permits no later than 60 days prior to the event).

Please keep in mind the Special Event Permit cannot be issued until all other required permits have been issued. The Special Event Permit must be issued at least 30 days before the event date.

Applications and fees will not be accepted on the day of, or after, the event. Failure to obtain a valid permit will result in non-participation in the event. Fire Prevention permits must be obtained for each location or event, unless otherwise approved by the Fire Code Official.

Please contact the Permit Center at 703.746.4200 or permit.center@alexandriava.gov for more information.

On-site Inspections

Events requiring Health Department, Building Safety, and/or Fire Prevention Permits generally include the need for an on-site inspection one hour prior to the event opening to the public. Events are encouraged to be prepared for inspections one hour before the start time by noting the common requirements listed in these guidelines and closely following the approved site plan during set-up.

Electricity and Generators

Permits are required for all electrical work and power installation in addition to what already exists at the proposed event location. All temporary electrical additions must be identified on the site plan.

Extension cords may not pass through doorways or windows from a building to the event site. Extension cords may only be connected to an exterior outlet protected by a Ground Fault circuit Interrupter. Extension cords must be grounded and may not be placed over walking surfaces without proper covering materials, avoiding potential for tripping hazards and injury.

All portable generators must be installed in accordance with the manufacturer's instructions. Use of multiple gasoline generators within a single event site should be avoided. Diesel generators are preferred. A licensed electrician is required to properly ground the equipment. The perimeter around all generators must be fenced from public areas for safety. Power cords along sidewalks, pathways, and roads must be properly covered and secured.

The event organizer must provide the permitting technician they are assigned with the contact information and license number for the electrician or electrical contractor who will install the generator. Generators may require on-site inspection before the event begins.

Food, Beverages, and Alcohol

Health Department inspections are required on-site for the sale of most food at outdoor special events. It is the responsibility of the event organizer to contact the Health Department at least four weeks before the event to file the proper permits. The event organizer will need to verify each food vendor has obtained a Temporary Food Establishment Permit and Fire Prevention Permit if cooking will be done at the event.

Event organizers are responsible for:

- Ensuring each food vendor has filed an application for and obtained a Temporary Food Establishment Permit and Fire Prevention Permit
- All clean-up including grease and grey water removal
- Clearly displaying all permits
- Having a point of contact present for on-site inspections at the event

To pass inspection:

- Areas of food preparation must be provided access to water using a food-grade connection
- No products may be sold in glass containers

Alcoholic Beverages at Events:

The City of Alexandria by Ordinance and the Commonwealth of Virginia by State Law regulate the possession, sale and consumption of alcoholic beverages. Special permits and licensing are required for the sale and consumption of all alcoholic beverages at an outdoor special event held in the City of Alexandria.

Only beer and wine are permitted in City Parks. Event organizers must pay a fee to obtain a permission letter from Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities verifying the event has been approved for permitting alcoholic beverages on premise. The event organizer must then submit that letter to the Virginia Alcoholic Beverage Control Authority (ABC) to file for the Banquet Special Event License.

Glass containers may not be used or carried by event attendees. Organizers may serve beverages from glass containers and must dispose of them immediately and with care to avoid breakage. Broken glass must be immediately disposed of. All glass must be removed from the event site at the end of the event.

The event organizer is responsible for filing and obtaining all required permits and special licenses. A copy of the Virginia ABC permit must be emailed to the Special Event Permit Manager at least 30 days before the event. The event organizer's Certificate of Liability Insurance must include Liquor Liability Coverage.

Events that include alcoholic beverages will:

- Have a minimum of two (2) Alexandria Police Officers onsite at the expense of the event organizer.
- Have licensed sellers/servers selling and serving alcohol to event attendees.
- Have professional event staff on-site to manage each entrance and exit to ensure alcohol remains within the event's perimeter.
- Clearly mark the event perimeter with permeable barriers.
- Remain in compliance with all City Ordinances and State Laws governing the sales and consumption of alcoholic beverages.

Restrooms and Sanitation

Per Health Department regulations, one restroom must be made available for every 100 people attending the event. At least 10% of restrooms must be ADA accessible. Event attendees must have access to hand sanitizer or handwashing stations and drinking water.

The location and delivery times of portable toilets must be approved as part of the Special Event Permit process. Advance delivery is considered part of event set-up and will increase total park usage fees. Portable restrooms left in the park after the event are considered part of event break down and will increase total park usage fees. All portable restrooms must be maintained daily.

For the courtesy of all users, event organizers are responsible for leaving all rented parks and facilities in the same condition in which they were found. Organizers should arrive prepared with all necessary cleaning supplies and disposal materials. Event organizers are responsible for properly disposing or recycling and garbage throughout the event. Immediately at the conclusion of the event, the area must be returned to a clean condition. Food waste, loose trash, and other guest-generated waste shall be thoroughly collected and disposed of properly. All tape, banners, string, rope, ribbon, etc, should be untied or cut loose from all structures and surfaces and disposed of properly.

Event organizers are required to remove their trash and recycling and are encouraged to set up their own temporary waste and recycling stations. Organizers may place bagged trash and recycling at City receptacles on the parameters of the parks, facilities, or public spaces. Bags must be tied shut. If event organizers use City provided receptacles, all trash and recycling should be bagged, secured, and placed in a central location for pickup that is approved before the event. All receptacles should be emptied and stacked where they were delivered.

Staffing for trash collection may be required for events and staffing fees will be billed to the event organizer after the event. Events may require trash collection and disposal services from both Park Operations (Park Ops) and Transportation & Environmental Services (TES) if the event is held in a park and impacts public space surrounding the park.

Events often have impacts on the areas surrounding where they are held. Because of this, a minimum of two TES staff may be assigned to events, with a maximum of twelve staff depending on the geographical reach of the event site, foot race, or parade route.

Food and beverage stains on any surfaces including but not limited to floors, walls, sidewalks, pathways, tables, chairs, benches, and trash receptacles must be mopped, scrubbed, and/or wiped clean. Event organizers are responsible for arranging for the proper disposal of gray water, cooking oil, grease, tar paper, food service matting, and other similar waste. Improper disposals or spills may be classified as a hazardous waste and result in fines.

Event Security

All outdoor special events are required to provide a safe and secure environment for participants and attendees. This is accomplished by anticipating potential security and crowd control issues related to the event activities and the surrounding environment where the event will occur. The size and type of event, as well as time of day and location of the event are considered when determining security needs. Event organizers are billed directly for the cost of staffing.

The Committee may determine that trained volunteers and event staff are able to meet the security needs of smaller community events and private activities. Larger events may require the services of a professional security company, Alexandria Police Department, Alexandria Fire Department/EMS, Alexandria Fire Marshal, officials of surrounding jurisdictions, and adequate event staffing.

Emergency Action Plan

Event organizers may be required to provide an Emergency Action Plan (EAP) using the template provided by the City. The purpose of the EAP is to identify security conditions at the event site and explain the procedures that will be followed to minimize or prevent the loss of life and property. The EAP defines coordination of necessary actions by the event organizer and/or City, State, and Federal Officials to provide timely notification, warning, and evacuation in the event of an emergency.

Crowd Managers

Events with over 1,000 persons in attendance at any given time are required to have dedicated crowd managers at a ratio of one crowd manager for every 250 people over 1,000 attendees. Crowd managers must be certified, professional event staff. The name and contact information of the Crowd Manager Supervisor must be included in the EAP.

Consumption of Alcohol

The consumption of alcohol at an event requires:

- The area where alcohol will be consumed to be blocked off with permeable barriers
- A minimum of two Alexandria Police Officers
- Emergency Medical Services support
- Two event staff at each entrance and exit to manage the containment of alcohol within the designated area
- Permission from Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities for consumption of wine and/or beer in a City Park
- ABC Permit issued from the Commonwealth of Virginia’s ABC Board

Determining Security Needs

Events will be required to arrange for on-site police and/or emergency medical services if there is a potential need for the services based on:

- Estimated attendance size
- Season/Weather
- Type of event
- Time of day event is held
- Issues encountered with event in the past
- Event location
- Consumption of alcoholic beverages

If Advanced Life Support (ALS) is needed to staff the event, the medical service provider must be City of Alexandria Emergency Services.

First Aid Kits are required to be on-site at every event. Kits must contain at a minimum:

- Compresses
- Bandages
- Ice packs
- Antiseptic

It is the event organizer's responsibility to ensure all medical support personnel, paid or volunteer, has the appropriate licensing, certifications, and insurance to provide services at the event. The Alexandria Fire Department has final authority to require a minimum number of licensed medical providers, volunteers, and staff positions, as well as other fire personnel necessary to support the medical and fire emergency access needs of a special event.

Event organizers providing their own security and medical personnel must include where they will be positioned on the site plan or route map and the time(s) they will be present in the Special Event Permit application. Arrangements are subject to approval by the Special Events Committee.

Police Department

The Alexandria Police Department determines staffing support for events.

A minimum of two APD officers is required when alcohol is permitted for events on City property.

Supplemental lighting, such as temporary light towers, may be required for outdoor special events to enhance public safety and security within the event site.

If it is determined at any time during the event that the event has failed to meet security needs, or if the security provided proves inadequate, the Fire Marshal and/or Alexandria Police Department may close any and all components of the event and/or provide additional police services that will be billed directly to the event organizer.

Events may be interrupted and/or canceled by the City while they are in progress if it is in the interest of public safety or protection of public property.

Event Insurance

The event organizer must provide a general liability insurance policy valid during the dates of all event activity. The policy must be purchased from a company licensed to conduct business in the Commonwealth of Virginia.

The Certificate of Insurance must list the City of Alexandria as the Certificate Holder as follows:

The City of Alexandria
301 King Street
Alexandria, VA 22314

The Certificate of Insurance must list the City of Alexandria as an additional insured.

All policies must protect the City of Alexandria, its officers, officials, employees, and agents from any and all claims for damages to property and/or bodily injury which may result from or in connection with any of the operations carried on by the event. The City of Alexandria Risk Management Division must receive a copy of all certificates of insurance for all coverages at least 30 days before the event.

All contractors and vendors providing goods or services for the event must also adhere to the above referenced insurance requirements. If the event includes alcohol, liquor liability coverage is also required.

Commercial General Liability Insurance requirements are:

- Per Occurrence \$1,000,000
- Personal & Advertising Injury \$1,000,000
- Products/Completed Ops \$1,000,000
- General Aggregate \$1,000,000
- Liquor Liability \$1,000,000

Required limits may vary depending on size, location, and type of event. Minimum limits are \$1,000,000.

Marketing and Signage

Please ensure that you have the Committee’s approval for the event before you begin to promote, market, or advertise the event.

Submitting the Special Event Application and site map and/or route map is not a guarantee the event will be approved, or that it will be approved for the requested date, time, and location.

Approval from the Committee does not ensure the Special Events Permit will be issued. The Special Event Permit will not be issued until all other permits have been filed and paid for.

Please indicate on your application if you intend to use signage for your event. It is important to consider the placement and/or distribution of flyers, stickers, and signage if materials and signage for the event will be distributed or posted within or outside of the event area. Organizers are asked to use marketing materials and signage that do not damage public and private property, do not violate City sign code ordinances, and are easy to clean and remove from the area.

Advertising materials may only be distributed within the event area.

The following are allowed within the event:

- Banners on freestanding polls. Polls may not be staked into the ground and must be secured with weights
- Banners on the side walls of buildings with the owner's permission
- Banners on tents
- Banners on stages

The following are not allowed for an event unless approved by the Committee and permitted by the City:

- Banners across or over streets or over passes
- Banners on light poles or utility poles
- Banners on barricades
- Banners on awnings or decks

Placement of signage, banners, and posters in the second group must be approved by the City.

Please do not inflate the attendance numbers in your marketing campaigns and materials. This may cause one or more of your permits to be revoked due to code ordinances and policies. It may also result in increased City staffing, resulting in increased fees.

Community Notifications and Petitions

Special events impact surrounding areas. All event organizers are encouraged to consider how their event will affect the community and may be required to develop a plan to address the potentially negative impacts on community members, organizations, businesses, and visitors.

The Committee may require the event organizer to notify residents and businesses that the event is taking place. Proof of notification must be provided to the Special Events Permit Manager at least 30 days before the event date. Notification may be made by email, postal mail, or hand delivering materials to the residents and/or businesses at least 30 days before the event date. Event organizers may also be asked to meet with groups to discuss possible impacts and how impacts can be mitigated.

Notifications should include the following information:

- Date(s) and Day(s) the event is scheduled
- Event start and end times, including set up and break down
- Location(s) and if there are rolling or stationary street closures
- Types of activities taking place during the event
- Estimated number of participants and attendees
- Detours or alternate route information if regular access is affected or if transportation systems are impacted
- Contact name, email and phone number for the day of the event and before the event so members of the public can contact the organization if they have concerns or issues that need to be addressed before or during the event.

Events with amplified sound and street closure(s) must file a Noise Permit and Right of Way Permit. They must notify neighborhoods immediately surrounding the event site of the day and time the event is taking place and that there will be amplified sound and street closure(s) permitted by the City. A traffic mitigation plan must be included with the Right of Way permit.

Petitions asking for signatures of businesses, organizations, and/or residents of a neighborhood affected by an event may be required for an application to receive final approval for permitting.

Accessibility

All events are required to comply with City, State, and Federal disability access requirements.

All temporary venues, related structures, and outdoor sites for special events must be accessible to persons with disabilities. If a portion of the area cannot be made accessible, an alternate area shall be provided with the same activities that are in the inaccessible vendors and booths. If all areas are not accessible, a map or program must be provided to attendees indicating the accessible restrooms, parking, telephones, drinking fountains, and other amenities.

The American with Disabilities Act (ADA) National Network provides information, guidance and training on how to implement the ADA in order to support the mission of the ADA to “assure equality of opportunity, full participation, independent living, and economic self-sufficiency for individuals with disabilities.” A planning guide for making temporary events accessible to people with disabilities is available at <https://adata.org/publication/temporary-events-guide>.

The United States Access Board is an independent federal agency devoted to accessibility for people with disabilities and the leading source of information on accessible design. Visit <https://www.access-board.gov/> for more detailed information and to download the latest ADA accessibility guidelines.

Animals at Events

Due to Health Department guidelines, event organizers must be permitted to have animals as part of event activities. This includes pony rides, petting zoos, and dog shows. It is encouraged that event attendees leave pets at home. All City Ordinances and Departmental Guidelines apply to animals and pets being managed by event staff and attendees at events.

This restriction does not apply to animals assisting persons impaired in sight, hearing, or mobility. Service animals must be certified.

Event organizers are required to pay a turf bond if the event is in a park and will have animals as part of the event’s activities. After the event, Park Staff will assess the maintenance needs to restore the turf of the park. The cost of the repair must be paid in full by the event organizer, and any remaining balance of the turf bond will be reimbursed within 30 days of the event.

Set Up and Break Down

Events must set up and break down between the specific hours of the permitted activity. Streets must be closed and barricaded prior to any set-up activity and remain closed until all break down is completed for events requiring street closures.

Vehicle and/or trailer access to fields and parks must be limited only to major infrastructure such as mobile stage set up within designated pathways. To reduce potential damage to fields and parks, all other items must be delivered in fields and parks by hand trucks or carts including but not limited to tents, supplies, merchandise, food, beverages, games, and exhibits.

Vehicles and trailers are strictly prohibited from all lawn and paved areas within fields and parks.

Virginia State Taxes

The City of Alexandria levies a one percent sales tax to provide revenue for the general fund. The tax is added to the State’s sales tax rates as shown below.

	State Rate	City Rate	Total Combined Rate
Retail Sales and Use Tax	5.0%	1.0%	6.0%
Tax on Eligible Food Items	1.5%	1.0%	2.5%
Vending Machine Sales Tax	6.0%	1.0%	7.0%

Businesses subject to sales tax must [submit a monthly report](#) to the Department of Taxation.

Any person [starting a business](#) in Virginia must [register with the State](#) prior to opening the business. Registration may be completed [online](#) or by filing [Form R-1](#) with the Virginia Department of Taxation. Businesses located in the City of Alexandria that collect sales tax must ensure that the Business Locality Code (or FIPS Code) on their R-1 is **51510**. To ensure that the business is registered in the correct jurisdiction, the business owner may [look up the business's FIPS Code](#).

If the business is located in the 22302, 33204, 22311, 22312, or 22206 zip code, the business owner may verify that business's locality via the [United States Postal Service website](#) by entering the business address and clicking on "Mailing Industry Information."

For more information, please visit the Virginia Department of [Taxation's Sales and Use Tax webpage](#) or contact the Department at 804.367.8037.

Special Events Policies and Procedures

The Special Event Permitting process is governed by the [Special Events Policies and Procedures](#) adopted by City Council.

It is the applicant and permit holder's responsibility to be aware of and adhere to all applicable ordinances and policies. Failure to comply with such requirements could result in permits being revoked or not issued.

If the special event is to be held on public property, the City Manager or designee may revoke the special event permit at any time if they determine that inclement weather is imminent, conduct of the special event would unreasonably damage public property, and any provision of any condition of the permit has not been met or is being violated. A decision by the City Manager or designee to revoke a permit is final.

Applicants who are considered by the City to have violated their permit without immediate permit revocation during the event will be notified of the violation in writing by the City within one month following the event date.

An applicant denied a special event permit in accordance with the Special Events Policies and Procedures may appeal the denial decision to the City Manager or his/her designee. Such appeal must be in writing and delivered to the City Manager within 30 days of issuance of the denial. The City Manager or his/her designee may consider such appeal promptly, but in no event later than the date and time of the proposed special event. If the decision to deny the special event permit was made by the City Manager or designee, that decision shall be final.