



## Getting Started: Eproval Pittsburgh Information for Applicants

### Definitions

Chapter 470 of the Pittsburgh City Code defines a “Special Event” as a parade, public assembly, performance, meeting, contest, exhibit, athletic competition or presentation, community event, block party, or ceremony, and which event is to be held:

- Wholly or partially on property owned or maintained by the City which is (i) designated by the City for First Amendment Activity or (ii) in a traditional public forum;
- On a street or sidewalk located within the City and will likely result in the obstruction of such streets or sidewalks or will likely compromise the ability of the City to respond to a public safety emergency; or
- On any other property, but requires for its successful execution the provision and coordination of City services to a degree over and above that which the City routinely provides.

Under Chapter 470 of the Pittsburgh City Code, No person shall conduct any Special Event as defined herein unless an Event Permit is issued pursuant to this chapter.

No person shall be required to obtain an Event Permit from the City of Pittsburgh to engage in First Amendment Activity on streets or sidewalks unless such Activity will likely result in the obstruction of City streets and/or sidewalks or will likely compromise the ability of the City to respond to a public safety emergency.

In the event that a person determines that his/her activity is not a Special Event, but still wishes to obtain an Event Permit for an Event to be held on City property, such person shall follow the instructions in Eproval to apply for a permit.

If a person holds a Special Event without a permit as required, the persons participating shall be required to disperse once the police direct him/her to do so. If a person involved in the activity believes that a permit is not required, he or she may take an immediate appeal as set forth in the regulations required pursuant to Section 470.04 of Chapter 470 of the Pittsburgh City Code.

Please read the pages that follow to understand the processes and fees that go into hosting an event in the City of Pittsburgh.

## **Introduction**

Beginning in the spring of 2024, the Office of Film & Event Management (OFEM) will be instituting a new two-phase application approach to event permitting with the launch of the new Eproval Permitting System. The new process will allow event organizers to secure their preferred venue first, and then focus on the details of the event. Previously, applicants would need to wait until many details of their event were in place before they could apply. Now, applicants can secure their venue and dates, then move forward with hiring all of their vendors and performers with the comfort of knowing they have a secure venue and dates.

**Please Note:** Block Party Permit applications **do not** follow the two phase approach and will maintain their traditional application & approval procedures.

The new process is separated into two distinct phases:

### **Phase One: Reservation of Space (ROS)**

The first step in securing a special event permit will now be completing and submitting the Reservation of Space application. This application will include mostly high-level details: contact info, venue, dates, times, routes (if a run/walk etc), and basic event concept information. Per City Code, this ROS application can be submitted up to 180 business days before the first permitted event date (“on-site date”, i.e. when set up would begin). To submit this application, event organizers do not need to provide site maps, insurance, vendor details, or any granular information at this time. The \$25 application processing fee will be charged at submission of the ROS application.

Once received, the ROS application will be reviewed by relevant stakeholders on the City’s Special Events Committee (SEC) to determine if the requested venue is available on the dates requested, that construction or other potential conflicts do not exist or can be mediated, and if resources are available to accommodate the event. Should all these conditions be met, the ROS application will be approved. At this time, OFEM will approve the ROS application and release to the applicant Phase Two of the Special Event Permit application, and the applicant can move forward with procuring all the necessary amenities for their event knowing their venue and dates are secure. Please note, an approval of the ROS application **is not a full approval to proceed** with the event, it merely commits the venue to the event. Full approval does not occur until Phase Two of the application is complete.

### **Phase Two: Special Event Application**

Upon approval of the ROS application, Phase Two of the application will be released to the applicant. It is at this time that all remaining relevant details of the event must be provided. These details include site maps, insurance, specific event timelines, any Public Safety needs, needed city resources, and entertainment information, among other things. The Phase Two application can be submitted whenever complete, but will be due to OFEM no later than fourteen (14) business days prior to the on-site date. Once submitted, the Phase Two application will be reviewed by the SEC. If there are

issues with the Phase Two application during review, the application will follow the current process of OFEM working with the applicant to resolve any outstanding concerns and endeavor to get the application to an approvable state. If approved, the applicant will receive their permit and invoice for any relevant charges, including the permit fee. It is at this time the event will be considered fully approved and permitted.

**Please note:** both Phase One and Phase Two of an event application must be completed no later than fourteen (14) business days before the on-site date. Please allow yourself enough time for both phases of the application to be reviewed and approved at least fourteen business days before your event.

### **New Features with Eproval**

In addition to being able to secure their event venue prior to completing all event-specific details, Eproval provides several new exciting features that will make the event permitting process more streamlined for applicants. Among them:

- **Scalable Application:** During Phase Two of the application, applicants will be asked a series of yes/no questions up front, such as but not limited to: “will your event have a stage?” and “will you be having fireworks?” This allows the system to custom build an application specific to that event. If the event takes place in a park and does not impact any roadways, the applicant will not be presented with questions about road closures. If an event will not have fireworks, the applicant will not have to answer any questions about fireworks. This will minimize the length of the application for small community events, while larger more complex events will require more information.
- **Public Event Calendar:** During the application process, applicants will be given the opportunity to opt-in to our brand new public event calendar. This will be a forward facing calendar that will list all pending and approved event applications. Applicants who opt into being on the calendar can provide contact info and website information, as well as a quick two to three sentence marketing pitch. This calendar will be available on the City’s website for anyone to find when looking for things to do in the City.

### **APPLICATION DEADLINES**

All permit applications are subject to application deadlines. Applications submitted after the below deadlines may not be reviewed or permitted. These deadlines allow City staff the necessary amount of time to review and process applications to ensure that there are no conflicts on venues or competing needs for resources. Please see the chart below for the deadlines for each permit type:

Block Party Permit.....Seven (7) **business days** before on-site date.  
Reservation of Space Application.....Recommended Thirty (30) **business days** before on-site date  
but at least Fourteen (14) **business days** before on-site date;  
no more than 180 **business days** before on-site date.

Phase Two / Full Event Application.....Fourteen (14) **business days** before on-site date.  
First Amendment Event.....Two (2) **business days** before event when possible

## **EVENT PERMIT FEES AND COSTS – Application Costs**

When submitting a Special Event Application via Eproval, a few initial fees will apply:

Special Event Permit Processing Fee:	\$25.00
Block Party Permits:	\$25.00

The processing fee for Special Event permits will be charged upon the submission of the Reservation of Space application. The fee for a Block Party Permit will be billed to the applicant once the application has been reviewed and approved. Reservation of Space applications will not be able to be submitted until the processing fee is paid to the Office of Film & Event Management. Fees can be paid by credit card online. In the event an applicant **MUST** receive an invoice to be processed in order to pay the processing fee, a request may be made to the Office of Film & Event Management before submission via email at [ofem@pittsburghpa.gov](mailto:ofem@pittsburghpa.gov). A check or money order can then be mailed or hand delivered with a copy of the invoice.

Following the processing fee, the final cost of the permit for an event will be determined by several factors that will be worked out during the review process. The first factor is the category in which an event falls: Charitable, General, or Commercial.

**Charitable Events** – Events that are directly associated with fundraising for an entity which is established as a not-for-profit corporation and which has been granted Federal tax-exempt status. All profits from these events are donated to charity. Events that claim charitable status may be required to identify profiting charity and percentage of proceeds donated. Applications submitted by recognized Community Groups and houses of worship will be considered Charitable.

**General Events** - Events such as, but not limited to, music performances, exhibitions, arts and craft shows that are free and open to the public and do not constitute Charitable or Commercial Events. These events do not generate any profit and are conducted for the good of the community and for quality of life.

**Commercial Events** - Events that seek to promote, advertise, or introduce a product, corporation, company or other commercial entity to either the general public or to a portion of the general public. These events generate a profit for the applicant or sponsor and a primary purpose of the event is to make money.

Based on the category in which an event falls, the base rate for the event permit is as follows\*:

Charitable Event Permit:	\$75.00
General Event Permit:	\$200.00
Commercial Event Permit:	\$675.00

*\*these permit costs are for static events. Runs, Walks, Rides, and Parades are classified separately below.*

The second factor that will influence the final cost of an event permit is the public property upon which the event takes place. There are separate, per day costs associated with different types of City property that could be used by an event. These costs help offset the loss of the City property to the general public. These public properties are broken down into the park space (Regional Parks & General Parks) and/or the Right of Way that is used. The use of streets for events will be charged based on the classification of the Right of Way using the Federal High-Way Association (FHWA) Functional Classification System. The chart below shows the costs of using different types of City property for an event:

	Charitable	General	Commercial
<b>2024 Special Event Costs</b>			
Application Processing Fee	\$ 25.00	\$ 25.00	\$ 25.00
Special Event Permit Fee	\$ 75.00	\$ 200.00	\$ 675.00

City Property Use Fees	Charitable	General	Commercial
General Property - undefined	\$ 25.00	\$ 50.00	\$ 100.00
Public Park - Regional - per day	\$ 50.00	\$ 300.00	\$ 450.00
Public Park - per day	\$ 35.00	\$ 100.00	\$ 150.00
Right of Way - Minor Arterial - per block	\$ 75.00	\$ 100.00	\$ 175.00
Right of Way - Collector - per block	\$ 37.50	\$ 50.00	\$ 87.50
Right of Way - Park Road - per block	\$ 20.00	\$ 40.00	\$ 80.00
Right of Way - Local - per block	\$ 18.75	\$ 25.00	\$ 43.75
Right of Way - Alley - per block	\$ 10.00	\$ 12.50	\$ 22.00
Right of Way - Sidewalk - per block	\$ 10.00	\$ 12.50	\$ 22.00

Please use the chart above to create an estimate of what your permit may cost. For example, if your event qualifies as a charitable event and you are applying to use space in a Regional park for one day, you can estimate that your Special Event Permit would cost \$125.00 (\$75 charitable special event permit fee + \$50 for one day of Regional Public Park). The total cost including the \$25 processing fee would be \$150.00. The Permit Coordinator from the Office of Film & Event Management that is assigned your application can help you determine the costs that would be associated with your event.

Any additional City of Pittsburgh services that an organizer wishes to contract or are required to hire by the terms of their permit are at an additional cost and are **not** covered by the processing fee or Special Event Permit Fee.

## **EVENT PERMIT FEES AND COSTS – Runs, Walks, & Rides**

Runs, Walks, & Rides, due to the nature of the distance they cover, are not subject to the same fees laid out above for static events. These mobile events will still pay the \$25.00 processing fee at application submission, and will be categorized as Charitable, General, or Commercial. However, a flat rate will be charged for the permit based on the *primary property type used for the route*. Just as for static events above, the property types are categorized by park type and roadway type. The chart below explains the fees for Runs, Walks, & Rides based on the primary property type used for the route:

ROAD CLASS	Primary ROW (over 50%)		
	Park/Local	Collector	Arterial
Processing fee	\$ 25.00	\$ 25.00	\$ 25.00
<b>Charitable</b>			
Park / Trails Only	\$ 75.00	x	x
Park & ROW	\$ 125.00	\$ 200.00	\$ 275.00
ROW Only	\$ 200.00	\$ 275.00	\$ 350.00
<b>General</b>			
Park / Trails Only	\$ 150.00	x	x
Park & ROW	\$ 200.00	\$ 275.00	\$ 350.00
ROW Only	\$ 275.00	\$ 350.00	\$ 425.00
<b>Commercial</b>			
Park / Trails Only	\$ 250.00	x	x
Park & ROW	\$ 325.00	\$ 425.00	\$ 525.00
ROW Only	\$ 425.00	\$ 525.00	\$ 625.00

As outlined in the chart above, the cost of the permit for a Run, Walk, or Ride is dependent on the category of the event and the primary property type used. For example, following the \$25.00 processing fee, a Charitable 5K run/walk that uses both park space and streets that are primarily ‘park’ or ‘local’ classified rights of way can expect to pay a permit fee of \$125.00 for Charitable ‘park & ROW’; park/local. On the other end of the spectrum, a Commercial 5K that uses only streets that are primarily classified as ‘collectors’ should expect to pay a permit fee of \$525.00 for a Commercial run that uses ROW only, primarily Collector. The Permit Coordinator from the Office of Film & Event Management that is assigned your application will go over this in detail and help understand the permit costs that can be incurred.

Any additional City of Pittsburgh services that an organizer wishes to contract or are required to hire by the terms of their permit are at an additional cost and are **not** covered by the processing fee or Special Event Permit Fee.

## **EVENT PERMIT FEES AND COSTS – Parades**

Parades are outlined directly in City code Chapter 470.04 to follow a specific set of prices. Parades will pay the below parade permit fees, inclusive of the application processing fee:

- Parade lasting no more than two (2) hours on a weekday: \$500.00
- Parade lasting no more than two (2) hours on a weekend or City Holiday: \$1,000.00
- Parade lasting over two (2) hours on a weekday: \$2,000.00
- Parade lasting over two (2) hours on a weekend or City holiday: \$3,000.00

The length of time of a Parade shall be determined from when the procession begins until it ends and without regard to the length of time required for road closures. The parade cost is inclusive of the cost of securing the parade route.

### **EVENT PERMIT FEES AND COSTS – Fines and Penalties**

In 2022 the Office of Film & Event Management instituted a series of fines that could be charged to events for various violations of permit conditions. Applicants will be given opportunities to rectify any shortcomings that could result in fines before any fines are actually imposed. A chart outlining possible fines is below. The Permit Coordinator assigned to your application can explain possible fines in further detail.

<b>Permit Violations - Fines</b>	
Overextension of stay (per day)	\$ 1,000.00
Unauthorized vehicles on grass (per vehicle and / or cost of repair)	\$ 20.00
Signage left on-site after 48 hours (per unit per day)	\$ 25.00
Portable toilets left on-site after 48 hours (per unit per day)	\$ 25.00
Equipment left on-site after 48 hours (per piece per day)	\$ 25.00
Damage to city property	<i>Cost of repair determined by DPW</i>
Deviation from permitted activity* <i>* such as setting up before permitted set up time (hours or days); having event elements not cleared by permit; etc.</i>	\$ 250.00 <i>And / or denial of future request</i>
Unpermitted event/film activity, upcharge applied to summation of all fees	25.00%

**Area of note: Unpermitted event activity.** If an event is found to be occurring on City property without a permit, and would be required to have one by City code and/or the Special Event Permit Regulations, the event can be disbanded by law enforcement if necessary. The host or applicant of the unpermitted event could also be charged the summation of the fees that would have been required of the event, plus a 25% surcharge.

**Deviation from permitted activity:** If an event is found to have violated conditions of their permit, they can be fined \$250.00 for doing so. If the violation of permit conditions is egregious or intentional, the Office of Film & Event Management and the Special Events Committee reserve the right to deny future permit requests from the event organizer or the specific subject event.

## **EVENT PERMIT FEES AND COSTS – Public Safety Services**

### **Bureau of Police: Officer Costs & Fees\***

<b>Rank</b>	<b>Hourly Rate</b>	<b>Holiday Rate</b>	<b>Administrative Fee</b>
Crossing Guard	\$30.00	\$45.00	\$6.37
PO1 – PO4	\$63.69	\$106.16	\$6.37
MPO/Detective	\$72.61	\$121.02	\$6.37
Sergeant	\$82.78	\$137.96	\$6.37
Lieutenant	\$94.37	\$157.28	\$6.37
Incident Commander	\$105.82	\$183.03	\$6.37

*\*Services for the Pittsburgh Bureau of Police are billed separately by Roll Kall, Inc and not via Eproval, and are subject to change. Certain events as designated by the Director of Public Safety and/or Chief of Police are required to hire an Incident Commander.*

### **Bureau of Police: 2024 HOLIDAYS**

On the ten 2024 holidays identified in the CBA, the pay rate will be the Holiday Rate for an officer working any detail:

- |                               |                   |
|-------------------------------|-------------------|
| 1. New Year’s Day             | January 1, 2024   |
| 2. Martin Luther King Jr. Day | January 15, 2024  |
| 3. President’s Day            | February 19, 2024 |
| 4. Police Memorial Day        | May 15, 2024      |
| 5. Memorial Day               | May 27, 2024      |
| 6. Independence Day           | July 4, 2024      |
| 7. Labor Day                  | September 2, 2024 |
| 8. Veteran’s Day              | November 11, 2024 |
| 9. Thanksgiving Day           | November 28, 2024 |
| 10. Christmas Day             | December 25, 2024 |

Holiday rate (2024) will be paid to Officers and Supervisors for shifts that start on December 31, 2024 and extend into New Year’s Day (January 1, 2025).

*\*Rates and holidays are subject to change.*

### **Bureau of Fire: Permit Costs & Fees**

<b>Service</b>	<b>Price</b>	<b>Additional Information</b>
Pyrotechnics/Fireworks Permit	\$73.13	Fire Inspector Required: \$49.44/hr
Tent permit	\$32.96	Per tent; over 400 sq.ft. along with flammability certificate
Open Flame Permit	\$20.60	Fire Inspector Required: \$49.44/hr
Bon Fire Permit	\$73.13	Fire Inspector Required: \$49.44/hr

*Rates may change due to union contract negotiations.*

### **Bureau of Emergency Medical Services**

<b>Service</b>	<b>Cost</b>	<b>Additional Info</b>
Paramedic	\$63.54 / hr	Minimum 4 hours
Paramedic OT (x1.5 after 8 hrs.)	\$95.31 / hr	
Paramedic (Holiday)	\$105.90 / hr	Minimum 4 hours



FICA taxes	\$4.86	per paramedic hour
Ambulance	\$260.00	Per unit per day
Medic Motorcycle	\$120.00	Per unit per day
Medic Bicycle	\$85.00	Per unit per day
Medic Cart	\$125.00	Per unit per day
River Rescue Boat	\$650.00	Per unit per day
Equipment Fee (1 person post)	\$75.00	Per unit per day
Administrative Fee	10%	% of Total Invoice

## **EVENT PERMIT FEES AND COSTS - Department of Public Works**

### **Department of Public Works: Material Rentals**

<b>Service</b>	<b>Cost</b>	<b>Additional Information</b>
Wooden Barricade	\$15.00 per barricade	Minimum order quantity: 10
Bike Fencing	\$21.00 per section	Minimum order quantity: 6
Water Barrier	\$31.00 per barrier	Minimum order quantity: 10
Sandbag	\$6.00 per bag	Minimum order quantity: 20
Clearstream Recycling Container	\$6.00 per container	Minimum order quantity: 5
Traffic Cones	\$6.00 per cones	Minimum order quantity: 10

### **Department of Public Works: Equipment Rental**

<b>Service</b>	<b>Cost</b>	<b>Additional Information</b>
Showmobile	\$824.00/day	Plus \$467 set-up fee
Trans-bleachers	\$175.00/day	Plus \$234 set-up fee
Three-Row standard bleachers	\$175.00/day	Plus \$350 set-up fee
Black Box Platform (set of 4)	\$412.00/day	Price includes delivery & set-up
Recycling Trailer (9 cubic yds)	\$175.00/rental	Price includes delivery & pick-up
Recycling Roll-Off (38 cubic yds)	\$262.00/rental	Price includes delivery & pick-up
Laborer per hour (trash removal)	\$99.00/hour	Per hour per laborer for trash

All costs associated with requested or required services will be provided via an estimated invoice. It is at this time that organizers should work with the Office of Film & Event Management to rectify any concerns over potential charges.

An invoice for all agreed upon City services will be provided. All invoices must be paid in full at least four (4) business days prior to the start of the first event day or a final event permit cannot be written. In the event that an organizer overpays for services, a refund will be issued within ninety (90) days post-event. If an event is undercharged or additional unplanned services are needed, an additional invoice may be issued to cover additional costs.

## **BLOCK PARTY PERMITS**

Block Party permits come at a non-refundable cost of \$25.00. Applications for Block Party permits must be submitted at least seven (7) business days in advance of the date of the block party to allow for coordination of City services.

Block Party permits will only be written for residentially-zoned roadways on Saturdays, Sundays, and holidays between the hours of 10:00am and 10:00pm, and include two (2) barricades from the Department of Public Works at no additional cost. Despite not being a ‘federal’ holiday, the City will grant Block Party Permits on Halloween so residents can celebrate with safe streets for kids to trick or treat on.

Block parties are subject to a series of policies, as well as some policy exemptions. Please download and review the “Block Party Policies” document in the “supporting documents” section for a complete review of all block party policies and requirements.

## **CITY-COUNTY BUILDING PORTICO PERMITS**

The City-County Building Portico (the outside area of the front of the CCB abutting Grant Street) is designated as a free speech area which can be permitted at no cost. Permits for this area are written on a first-come-first-served basis and can only be written for events occurring during normal business hours. Please see the “CCB Portico Policies” document in the “supporting documents” section for more detail.

## **INSURANCE AND INDEMNIFICATION**

Due to the risk of personal injury and property damage under certain circumstances, insurance will be required under the following conditions: a) All Athletic Competition Events and b) Any Special Event involving animal(s), fireworks, automobile(s) or other vehicle(s), including but not limited to watercraft, aircraft, or motorcycles, the sale of food, or the sale or distribution of alcohol. Additionally, requests made by applicants to use the following City equipment: sound equipment, showmobile, trans-stage, or trans-bleachers.

Where required, the Applicant or, if applicable, the Organization/Sponsor shall maintain insurance in the amount specified below to cover the entire duration of the Event. The applicant shall provide to the Office of Film & Event Management a certificate of insurance duly executed by the officers or authorized representatives of a responsible and non-assessable insurance company, evidencing the following minimum coverage(s) and specifically identifying CITY as an additional insured, which insurance shall be non-cancelable, except upon thirty (30) days prior written notice to CITY:

	<b>Individual Occurrence</b>	<b>Aggregate</b>
<b>General Liability</b>		
Bodily injury, including death	\$ 500,000.00	\$ 1,000,000.00
Property damage	\$ 50,000.00	\$ 100,000.00

All policies must be made on an occurrence basis. Claims-made policies are not acceptable.

The Applicant on behalf of himself/herself or any other persons, organizations, firms or corporations on whose behalf the application is made, by filing a permit application shall represent, stipulate,

contract and agree that they will jointly and severally indemnify and hold the City harmless against liability, including court costs and attorney's fees, and attorney's fees on appeal, for any and all claims for damage to property, or injury to, or death of persons arising from the sponsor's activities authorized by the Special Event permit. A specific Indemnification Statement shall be agreed to at application submission.

## **ALCOHOL AT EVENTS**

Any events that wish to have alcohol served or distributed at their event must comply with all requirements of the Pennsylvania Liquor Control Board's established policies for the sale of liquor and alcohol. They have specific guidelines over how alcohol can be distributed and sold at events, and who can do the distribution or sale. Please see their guidelines [here](#) for specific information. Any alcohol distribution or sales at events on City property must also receive permission from the City via the Special Event Permit as well as providing all necessary PALCB documentation.

Liquor Liability. Where the Applicant, on behalf of any other persons, organizations, firms or corporations on whose behalf application is made, seeks to hold a Special Event involving the sale of alcoholic beverages and has otherwise been granted all necessary permits for such purpose, the Applicant shall maintain a policy or policies of Liquor Liability Protection with limits of not less than \$1,000,000. Such insurance shall be evidenced on the certificate of insurance provided.

## **THE SPECIAL EVENTS COMMITTEE**

The Special Events Committee, or SEC, is the body authorized by the Mayor under Chapter 470 of the Pittsburgh City Code to facilitate the application and permitting process for all qualifying events. The SEC is chaired by the Public Safety Director or Assistant Public Safety Director, and is led by the Manager of the Office of Film & Event Management.

The SEC is comprised of members representing most City departments including Police, Fire, EMS, Emergency Management, Mobility & Infrastructure, Park Rangers, Public Works, Pittsburgh Regional Transit, Citiparks, Permits, Licenses, & Inspections, and Office of Film & Event Management. During the review process, these members review the application as it applies to their department and identify any special needs or approvals necessary for the event to be approved. For example, the police representative will help determine if any police coverages would be required, and the Mobility & Infrastructure representative will check to determine if any existing construction could interfere with an event and/or ensure no future work is permitted in an area that has been approved to host an event during the event dates. One of the chief responsibilities of this committee is to ensure that City property and resources are not over-burdened.

The SEC meets weekly on Tuesdays mornings, at which time new applications are introduced and current applications are either voted on or continue to be reviewed. During these meetings the SEC may also host prospective event organizers who wish to present event concepts to the group for

feedback, as well as organizers of large scale or high-impact events to allow for more in-depth conversation and review of event plans.

## **APPLICATION REVIEW PROCESS: HOW IT WORKS AND WHY IT MATTERS**

From beginning to end, the process of applying to hold a Special Event takes about two weeks. Applications are considered “received” once a completed Reservation of Space application is submitted and the application processing fee is paid, whether at submission of the application or shortly thereafter via a check or money order. Once those conditions are met, the ROS application is sent to Special Event Committee stakeholder departments.

### **Phase One: Reservation of Space (ROS)**

- The first step in securing a special event permit will now be completing and submitting the Reservation of Space application. This application will include mostly high-level details: contact info, venue, dates, times, routes (if a run/walk etc), and basic event concept information. Per City code, this ROS application can be submitted up to 180 business days before the first event date (when set up would begin). To submit this application, event organizers do not need to provide site maps, insurance, vendor details, or any granular information at this time. The \$25 application processing fee will be charged at submission of the ROS application.
- Once received, the ROS application will be reviewed by relevant stakeholders on the City’s Special Events Committee (SEC) to determine if the requested venue is available on the dates requested, that construction or other potential conflicts do not exist or can be mediated, and if resources are available to accommodate the event. Should all these conditions be met, the ROS application will be approved. At this time, OFEM will approve the ROS application and release to the applicant Phase Two of the Special Event Permit application, and the applicant can move forward with procuring all the necessary amenities for their event knowing their venue and dates are secure. Please note, an approval of the ROS application is **not** a full approval to proceed with the event, it merely commits the venue to the event. Full approval does not occur until Phase Two of the application is complete.

### **Phase Two: Special Event Application**

- Upon approval of the ROS application, Phase Two of the application will be released to the applicant. It is at this time that all remaining relevant details of the event must be provided. These details include site maps, insurance, specific event timelines, any Public Safety needs, and entertainment information, among other things. The Phase Two application can be submitted whenever complete, but will be due to OFEM no later than fourteen (14) business days prior to the on-site date. Once submitted, the Phase Two application will be reviewed by the Special Events Committee. If there are issues with the Phase Two application during review, the application will follow the current process of OFEM working with the applicant

to resolve any outstanding concerns and endeavor to get the application to an approvable state. If approved, the applicant will receive their permit and invoice for any relevant charges, including the permit fee. It is at this time the event will be considered fully approved and permitted.

Phase Two Applications that are approved may not necessarily be finalized; there could still be several weeks of working with the Office of Film & Event Management to determine final details and schedules, which could influence final costs and permit conditions.

If after the initial reviews the application is still in a state that leaves the SEC unable to approve it after the first week, it will remain held over to the next scheduled meeting. Permit Coordinators from The Office of Film & Event Management will work with the applicant to answer questions that SEC members have or to gather more complete information or details that allow members to accurately review and approve the application.

In the case of large-scale or new events, the SEC may request that an applicant attend an SEC meeting so that the applicant can sit before the committee and explain their event and concepts, as well as their safety, sanitation, and crowd control plans, among other things. This allows for questions to be answered in a more immediate fashion and can help expedite the review of larger, more complicated events, as well as allow the SEC to become more familiar with new events.

Once all of the details of an event are finalized and all services are scheduled, the final step is submitting payment for all required City services and the issuance of the permit. Per chapter 470 of the Pittsburgh City Code, all payments for city services must be paid a minimum of four (4) business days before the scheduled start of the event for a final permit to be issued to the applicant. If an applicant overpays, a refund will be issued post-event. If they are under-billed, additional invoices may be sent. Once payment for services is received, a final permit can be issued.

### **Denials or Permit Revocations**

While it is rare that the SEC must vote to deny an application, it could occur. In most cases, the Office of Film & Event Management will work with applicants to help them meet requirements that would allow the SEC to approve an event. This may not always be the case due to a variety of factors. Should an application be denied, applicants have an ability to appeal this decision via a process that is outlined in the Special Event Regulations.

In extreme cases, the City may have to revoke already issued event permits. This would likely only occur if a State of Emergency is declared in the city, or if the event site becomes unavailable due to an emergency or natural disaster.

In rare cases, an event permit could be suspended if an applicant is proven to have displayed bad faith in the review process, to have misrepresented the event during application or review, or begins to set up or operate their event in a manner that presents a life-safety issue to the public or property.

Lastly, the City may revoke event permits when required by public health guidelines issued by the Allegheny County Health Department or the State of Pennsylvania in response to Covid-19 mitigation strategies or other health emergencies. If health guidance or other restrictions are put in place that would prevent a permitted event from occurring, the City will revoke the event permit. However, the Office of Film & Event Management will work with the affected event applicants to reschedule the event or address any other issues.

### **First Amendment Events**

Freedom of speech and association are among those precious rights guaranteed and protected by the United States and Pennsylvania Constitutions. The law gives the City the ability to balance those rights with its interests in protecting its citizens and preserving City and public property. As a municipal government, the City may enact content-neutral restrictions on the time, place, and manner of such expression in order to promote such significant government interests.

No person shall be required to obtain an Event Permit from the City of Pittsburgh to engage in First Amendment Activity on streets or sidewalks unless such Activity will likely result in the obstruction of City streets and/or sidewalks or will likely compromise the ability of the City to respond to a public safety emergency. If a planned First Amendment Activity will likely result in the obstruction of City streets or sidewalks and would impact Public Safety's ability to respond to an emergency, either by physical barrier or consumption of resources, then a **permit is required**. If a person holds a Special Event without a permit as required hereunder, the persons participating shall be required to disperse once the police direct him/her to do so. In the event that a sponsor of a First Amendment Activity can evidence indigency, no application fee or cost recovery charges or costs shall be charged. Indigency waivers are available via the "Useful Documents" section on the Eproval home page and must be notarized.

Permits for First Amendment Activity shall be issued on a content-neutral basis to the extent required by law. They shall be evaluated no later than two (2) business days from the receipt of a completed permit application where such First Amendment Activity is intended to respond to current events and depends for its value on a timely response, and shall contain only such restrictions on time, place, and manner that are reasonably related to the City's significant interests.

All organizers of First Amendment events are encouraged to apply for Special Events permits from the Office of Film & Event Management as it adds legitimacy to the event and allows Public Safety officials to review plans and ensure that attendees are able to express their first amendment rights in the safest way possible. To help promote first amendment rights, the City has designated the Grant Street Portico of the City-County Building as a free speech venue and organizers can apply to use the space free of charge.

## **IN CLOSING...**

The process outlined above is critical to ensuring that events are appropriately managed, can proceed without conflict, and above all are safe. The use of public property and services for civic, community, and other special events contributes to the unique character and vitality of the City. Events can range from small community block parties to large-scale, high-impact productions. Having events apply for permits allows the City to manage competing uses of its public space and public safety resources. Pittsburgh is only so big, and like any major city has a limited number of resources. The permitting process ensures that events do not over-tax any city resources or areas, while helping strike a balance to allow as many events as possible while ensuring a high quality of life for all residents.

Securing an event permit also ensures that organizers have the right to the space they have been granted permission to use. Without a permit, event organizers have no legal right to prevent the general public from using public space. These permits make sure that the hard work of organizing an event does not go to waste if someone else has legal permission to the public property.

Any and all other questions not covered in this guide can be directed to the Office of Film & Event Management at [ofem@pittsburghpa.gov](mailto:ofem@pittsburghpa.gov), or call 412-255-2641.



**THANK YOU!**