
SEATTLE PARKS AND RECREATION

PARK USE PERMITS - FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

DO I NEED A PARK USE PERMIT?

Permits are required if any of these apply to your activity: 1) Amplified sound is planned. 2) Equipment is brought into a park. 3) The event is publicly advertised. 4) Your gathering will impact normal public use of the park and/or more than 50 people.

WHAT PARKS CAN I HOST A SPECIAL EVENT IN?

Seattle Parks and Recreation has over 480+ parks in our system. Depending on the scope of your event, many of these parks can host events. Every park has specific parameters, logistics, etc. based on amenities, shapes, locations, neighborhoods and more.

WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A MAJOR SPECIAL EVENT AND A PARK SPECIAL EVENT?

For the purposes of Seattle Parks and Recreation a Special Event is contained within Parks Department Property. A Major Special Event is an event that is partially or completely held on parks department property and requires/has: Street closures, police staffing, beer gardens, marches among many others. You can find more information about Major Special Events: <https://www.seattle.gov/special-events-office/>

WHAT QUALIFIES AS A 1ST AMENDMENT EVENT?

Generally, 1st amendment events have minimal set up. They generally are designed to make a person or groups perspective heard. Some include passing out written material. There are many exceptions. If you have questions, contact us, parkusepermits@seattle.gov

HOW DO I RESERVE A SPACE IN A PARK?

By filling out a park use application including proposed event Map and submitting to parkusepermits@seattle.gov or mailing it to Event Scheduling, c/o Special Events, 300 Elliott Ave W, Suite 100, Seattle, WA 98119 or Fax 206-684-4853. You can download and fill in a digital pdf and return via email. Applications are here: <https://www.seattle.gov/parks/rentals-and-permits/outdoor-event-permits> Spaces are reserved on a first come, first serve rolling calendar basis.

WHAT DOES IT COST TO RESERVE A PARK SPACE?

Fees are based on the size and scope of the park. Fees range from \$15-\$49 hour. Park fees can be found here: Note rental time includes set up and break down. There may be other fees depending on if you have commercial advertising, need electricity, multiple venues within a park and more.

HOW DO I KNOW YOU HAVE RECEIVED MY APPLICATION? HOW DO I PAY?

You will receive a confirmation roughly 2-4 weeks after the application is submitted that will include methods of payment to complete the reservation process. Non-refundable payments are due 90 days prior to you event(s). Major Special Events payment is due 30 days prior to event. All events must cancel with 14 days of confirmation or fees will be owed.

DO I HAVE TO BE PART OF AN ORGANIZATION TO HOST A SPECIAL EVENT?

No, but it is recommended.

HOW FAR IN ADVANCE CAN I BOOK A SPECIAL EVENT?

One (1) Rolling Calendar year. i.e. If today's date is 5/1/23 you can request a space for any date through May 2024

DO I NEED INSURANCE?

Yes. All special events need insurance. City of Seattle has very specific insurance requirements. They can be found here: <https://www.seattle.gov/parks/rentals-and-permits/outdoor-event-permits>

CAN I ADVERTISE IN A PARK?

Yes, with a permit. Although there are parameters and some restrictions based on individual parks. You can find information <https://www.seattle.gov/parks/rentals-and-permits/outdoor-event-permits>

CAN I HAVE AMPLIFIED SOUND IN PARKS?

Yes, with a permit. Note not all parks allow amplified sound. Allotted time of amplified sound may be limited. Volume and type of amplified sound may be restricted based on park.

CAN WE SERVE/SELL ALCOHOL IN A PARK?

Yes, with a permit. An application must be submitted to the Parks department as well as the citywide special events office for sales. You can find more information on the citywide special events here: <https://www.seattle.gov/special-events-office/>. If you are serving in a park you may not need this. All alcohol must be served in a fenced area and must have permits from WSLCB and a fire permit.

CAN I HAVE BOUNCE HOUSE (S)/HIRED ENTERTAINMENT?

Yes, with a permit. Note that this changes some insurance requirements. You can find out more information here: <https://www.seattle.gov/parks/rentals-and-permits/outdoor-event-permits>

CAN I CHARGE A FEE?

By permit you can charge fees for: entrance, food, beverage and merchandise sales. 10% lump sum of gross sales/donations are due to Event Scheduling 10 days after event from the event organizer (permittee). We do not accept individual payments from vendors. All aspects of the event are the responsibility of the permittee.

DOES SEATTLE PARKS AND RECREATION PROVIDE EQUIPMENT?

No. Seattle Parks and Recreation does not provide these types of services.

ARE THERE RESTROOMS AT THE PARK?

Many parks have restrooms, but not all. Depending on the size/scope or location of your event you may be required to provide portable restrooms. Note that many restrooms are closed for winter season, starting in October until April. It is encouraged to check with us or visit the park.

WHAT DO I NEED TO BRING TO THE PARK ON THE DAY OF MY EVENT?

Once we have fully processed your permit, we will send you a copy of the permit roughly two weeks prior to your event which you should have on you during your permitted times. Permits are not sent until all items have been completed.

WHAT HAPPENS IF I REQUESTED ELECTRICITY OR A BOLLARD MOVED AND IT ISN'T?

First look to make sure you are there during the permitted time. There is no guarantee that power or other items will be taken care of, if your rental has not started yet. If your rental has started and you are missing a service provided by Seattle Parks, please contact the Park Duty Officer, 206-684-7250. This is also listed in your conditions section of your permit.

WHAT IF I HAVE SAFETY CONCERNS WHILE IN THE PARK OR SOMEONE REFUSING TO LET ME ACCESS MY PERMITTED SPACE?

Call the Seattle Police Department

MY VENDOR CAUSED DAMAGED DURING MY EVENT, WHY ARE YOU FOLLOWING UP WITH ME?

For permitted special events you are responsible for everyone at your event and any organizations that you contract or are working with.

CAN I SHOOT SMALL ROCKETS IN PARKS?

Usually, but with many, many requirements, plans for these must start a couple of months in advance and will have indicate safety plans, possible fire permits and more.

CAN I HOST A SCHOOL GRADUATION CEREMONY IN A PARK?

Yes