



National Capital Commission  
Commission de la capitale nationale

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# **EVENT GUIDELINES MANUAL**

**for the use of  
NCC LANDS**

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# SECTION I

## Guidelines for the use of NCC LANDS

### 1.0 WHY IS AN EVENT PERMIT REQUIRED ?

The NCC has prepared a series of guidelines to assist event organizers in staging activities on Commission lands. The ultimate OBJECTIVES of these guidelines are:

- **To preserve, protect and enhance the natural values and features of the Capital for all to experience today and in the future.**
- **To ensure that events provide meeting places where all Canadians can understand and appreciate the Capital experience.**
- **To provide attractive settings for the staging of events in the Capital.**

These guidelines outline the information required to obtain the necessary approvals to stage activities on NCC lands and can be used as a checklist to assist organizers in the planning of events. The guidelines found in this manual apply to all NCC lands.

If there are any matters not addressed in these guidelines which relate to your event, please contact the designated NCC representative.

### 2.0 WHEN IS AN EVENT PERMIT REQUIRED ?

An Event Permit is issued to a second party (hereinafter referred to as the "Permittee") to use NCC sites including an open green space, a park, a parkway or a recreational pathway or portion of a trail system in order to hold an organized activity. An event is deemed to be an attraction, either publicly or privately sponsored, which imposes a demand in a specific location above and beyond usual expectations.

The types of activities addressed by these guidelines include festivals, concerts, exhibitions, rallies, catered functions, sporting competitions, walks, picnics, weddings, etc.

### 3.0 WHAT ARE THE EVENT PERMIT TYPES ?

The various types of requests for events are:

- 3.1 **Major Event:** Public or private event where the total projected attendance **exceeds 1000 people**, where equipment is installed and where exclusivity is required on a site. Refer to appendix (I) for additional event permit type definition.
- 3.2 **Small Scale Event:** Public or private event where the total projected attendance does **NOT exceed 1000 people**, where equipment is installed and where exclusivity is required on a site (or a portion thereof). Refer to appendix (I) for additional event permit type definition.
- 3.3 **Public Gatherings:** Public activity where site infrastructures are not required, where equipment is not to be installed on the site and where exclusivity is not required. The site is usually used for a short period of time as a meeting place to prepare for an activity such as a march.
- 3.4 **Parkway/Driveway/Trail Use:** Public event which requires partial or complete closure of a parkway/driveway to hold activities such as: parades, cycling and running races, walks, etc. Contact the designated NCC rep. to obtain the specific guidelines on use of Parkways/Driveways
- 3.5 **Recreational Pathway-Trail Use:** Public event which requires the use of a portion of the recreational pathway or trail to hold activities of a **non-competitive** nature such as: walkathons, cyclethons, bladethons, etc.( The Gatineau Park trail network system will allow for events of competitive nature in approved locations only) For reasons of public safety, the exclusive use of the recreational pathway network is not permitted. Contact the NCC designated NCC representative to obtain the specific guidelines on use of the Recreational Pathway network, the Gatineau Park trail network or the Greenbelt trail network
- 3.6 **Canal Skateway Use:** Public event which requires the use of the Rideau Canal Skateway to hold activities which are compatible with the use of the skateway. Activities such as: skateathons, parades, etc. Contact the NCC Event Support Section to obtain the specific guidelines on use of the Rideau Canal Skateway.
- 3.7 **Filming:** Activity which requires the use of NCC lands to hold a photography and/or filming session.
- 3.8 **Aircrafts:** Activity which requires the use of NCC lands for the **launching** of aircrafts such as: hot air balloons, blimps or helicopters. Landing of hot air balloons and blimps are not permitted on NCC lands as per Transport Canada Regulations.

## 4.0 WHAT ARE THE EVENT FEES ?

Event Fees are applied for the use of NCC lands for organized events and are based on the following principles:

- to recover administrative, variable, operational and wear and tear costs to manage NCC's capital investments such as: parks, parkways, bridges, recreational facilities, etc.; and

Event Fees are different for non-profit and for profit making ventures and are dependent on the type of venture (profit/non profit, the number of event days, the number of people in projected attendance, monitoring requirements and the number and type of installations and infrastructures brought onto a site. An event that is national in scope and coincides with the goals and objectives of the Commission as outlined in its mandate can apply for the exemption of NCC's user fees. Contact the designated NCC representative to obtain more information on the exemption process.

The event fees must be paid **ten (10) working days** prior to the event. If fees are not paid prior to the event, the permit will not be issued.

## 5.0 HOW TO SELECT A SUITABLE SITE FOR YOUR ACTIVITY ?

5.1 When NCC land is to be used for an activity, a key concern is the protection of sensitive natural features including trees, shrubs, flower beds and displays, and avoidance of damage to park assets such as benches, light standards and monuments. It is essential to verify whether your proposed event is compatible with a park setting and to confirm site availability with the designated NCC representative before submitting a request. You may also consult Appendix 1a "Site Profiles" for more information on compatible use of sites and assets.

5.2 The National Capital Commission recognizes that events will have an impact upon its lands. Our objective is to minimize the damage so as to assure the long term health of parks and other green spaces. The impact of an event is related to a number of factors including:

- The season during which the event is held.
- The weather conditions before, during and after an event.
- The duration of an event.
- The event set up, site preparation and dismantling operations.
- The type, placement and number of pieces of equipment and infrastructure required.
- The number of visitors, the activities which they engage in and the length of their visit.

**It is a combination of these factors which could create a negative impact and thus managing the mitigation measures requires careful planning before the event, during the implementation and during the actual event.**

5.3 **Site capacity:** Park capacity is defined as the total number of people which can access the site at one time considering public safety requirements and the protection of the environmental and natural features and quality of the site. Park capacities must be respected in order to minimize detrimental environmental impacts and site degradation. The park capacity can be calculated for a specific event by consulting the designated NCC representative.

**Respecting these guidelines will go a long way towards ensuring that the capacity of a site to support events is not compromised.**

5.4 **Park use and recovery period:** In order to protect the environmental and natural features of a site, the following park use and recovery period guideline must be respected:

Events in NCC parks are generally limited to **7 days** not including set up and take down time. The total period of occupation generally does not exceed **12 days**. After each MAJOR EVENT, the site must be allowed a minimum **recovery period** of **12 days** beginning on the day after the last take-down and ending the day before the first set-up day of the next major event. Events are not permitted on the site during a recovery period.

A recovery period is not required following a SMALL SCALE EVENT. However, a maximum of **3 days** per week may be used for small scale events. Each week is considered to start each Sunday and end on Saturday at midnight.

See Appendix I for the park capacity for individual lands.

## 6.0 WHEN SHOULD YOU SUBMIT YOUR APPLICATION

All requests must be submitted as per the following schedule:

- 6.1 Planning and Scheduling Phases:** Event organizers wishing to use NCC lands must forward their request in writing to the National Capital Commission to the designated representative, a minimum of **30 days** in advance for *any activity* or a minimum of **90 days** in advance for a *major event*. Applications will be reviewed and approved by the Events and Program Support Section as per the following scheduling phases:

<b>Process</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 90 days major events</li> <li>• 30 days for any activity</li> </ul>				
<b>Initiation Phase Meeting #1</b> 60-90 days major events 20-30 days any activity	<b>Development Phase Meeting #2</b> 20-30 days major ev. 10-15 days minor ev.	<b>Implementation Phase Ongoing</b> 0-5 days major events If required - minor events	<b>Commissioning Phase Ongoing</b> major events If required -minor events	<b>Evaluation Phase</b> major events If required - any activity
<b>Needs Analysis</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Scope and nature of event</li> <li>• Site requirements and plans</li> <li>• Equipment request</li> <li>• Marketing and Communications Plan</li> <li>• Etc.</li> </ul> <b>Review Site and Event Guidelines</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Insurance and Performance Guarantee</li> <li>• Site Tolerance Zones</li> <li>• Sale of goods/vendors</li> <li>• Litter</li> <li>• Signage</li> <li>• Etc.</li> </ul>	<b>Confirmation and approval of:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Land Use</li> <li>• Liability Insurance and Performance Guarantee</li> <li>• Site plans</li> <li>• Signage</li> <li>• Schedules</li> <li>• Waste Management</li> <li>• Screening Process(mitigation Measures)</li> <li>• Etc.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pre-site visit</li> <li>• Monitor Set-up</li> <li>• Monitor (during event)</li> <li>• Monitor, dismantling</li> <li>• Etc.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Site Restored as per approved restoration plan</li> <li>• Site Inspection</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• NCC Site Monitoring Report</li> <li>• Post-Event Evaluation</li> <li>• Invoice For Damages (if required)</li> <li>• Performance Bond Returned</li> </ul>

**6.2 Rescheduling:** If the rescheduling of an activity is required, the designated NCC representative will accommodate the application according to the following criteria:

- . If an alternate date and/or location can be identified; and
- . If a new application is submitted.

**Event Fees:** If applied to the original application, may be transferred to the alternate site, but only if notification is given before the opening date of the original activity.

**6.3 Priority:** Should two or more events request the use of the same property, priority will be assigned according to the following ranking:

- I.** Events organized by the NCC or organized in partnership with the NCC (i.e. Canada Day, events during Winterlude, etc.).
- II.** Events of a national or international scope.
- III.** Events of a recreational, educational and/or social nature.
- IV** Individual activities and small family or community-related activities.

## **7.0 PERFORMANCE GUARANTEES**

### **Performance Bonds:**

1. The Permittee must provide a letter of credit or surety bond in the minimum amount of **\$2,000** for a **major event**. The NCC reserves the right to increase the fee if the event poses additional threat to the site. The Permittee must name the National Capital Commission as obligee. The Permittee must keep the performance guarantee in force for the duration of the event, including set-up and take-down days. The letter of credit or surety bond must be presented to the National Capital Commission **ten (10) days** prior to the event. The permit will not be issued until the NCC receives the letter of credit or surety bond.
2. The NCC reserves the right to retain the guarantee in whole or in part if the permittee or their sub-contractors do not respect all obligations set out in the event permit.
3. The Permittee is responsible for any damage caused to NCC property including portable assets. The performance guarantee will be used to cover restoration costs after the event. The damage will be assessed by the designated NCC representative in collaboration with the Permittee.
4. If an event creates damages in excess of the performance guarantee, the Permittee will be charged accordingly and the amount of the guarantee will be increased the following year.
5. If event organizers have any outstanding charges with the NCC, they will not be granted a new permit until the invoice has been paid in full.

## **Insurance requirements:**

The Permittee must provide proof of civil liability insurance for bodily injury and property damage naming the National Capital Commission as additional insured. The amount of insurance coverage required is contingent upon the event permit types. The minimum amount is two million dollars and can increase depending on the risk of the events.

## **8.0 WHAT ARE THE EVENT GUIDELINES FOR THE USE OF NCC LANDS ?**

One of the most important features of the event guidelines is the screening process and mitigation measures. Once the applicant has finalized his workplan, a screening process is conducted to address mitigation measures. The main elements of the screening process are:

### **8.1 Site plans**

1. Major event organizers bringing special equipment, booths, canopies, tents, staging or structures into a park must provide with their application, a preliminary site plan which is drawn to scale and which details the type, number, size and location of all infrastructure. The designated NCC representative can provide scale base plans for this purpose.
2. The designated NCC staff will review ALL preliminary site plans. The Permittee will be requested to submit a final site plan which addresses all comments and issues raised by the designated NCC representative. This final site plan must be submitted **30 days** before set-up at which time an on-site meeting will be scheduled. **Any on-site modifications before and during the event must be previously approved by the designated NCC representative.**
3. Major event organizers must submit as part of their application, a contingency plan based on circumstances such as un-cooperative weather, in order to ensure that site environmental impacts are minimized during the set-up and site preparations, during the actual event as well as during dismantling operations. For major events, the event organizer must be prepared to carry out night watering of the turf during drought seasons. In reverse situations where the park is saturated with water after a continuous rainfall, the Permittee must cover with mulch to the approval of the NCC sections of grassed areas on site that are threatened by heavy pedestrian traffic.

### **8.2 Site Emergency Plan**

The Applicant must prepare a Site Emergency Plan that indicates one (1) emergency vehicle access and site evacuation route (s). This point of entry and exit must be clearly identified in the event site plan and shall be reviewed and approved by the local authorities (i.e. Police, Regional Ambulance, Canadian Red Cross, St-John's Ambulance, Fire Departments, etc.).



### 8.3 Tent and infrastructure placement and set-up

When a tent or other infrastructure is set up on site, it must adhere to the location and dimensions of the site plan approved by the NCC.

The placement of posts and pegs is not permitted in tree root zones, pavement decorative surfaces, sensitive or unique ground surfaces and wall treatments.

The designated NCC representative can provide a map showing the **approximate location** of underground utilities and irrigation systems. However, it is the responsibility of the Applicant, **through NCC's contractor**, to locate and stake out utilities prior to setting up tents or other infrastructures. The repair of any and all damages to underground utilities and irrigation systems (including irrigation heads) are the responsibility of the Applicant.

The attachment of wires and ropes to trees, park furniture, light standards, buildings, monuments or any other permanent structure is strictly prohibited.

Platforms are required under all tents and structures installed over turf areas in urban parks. Platforms must be elevated to approximately **100 to 150 mm** and left open at the ends to allow air circulation.

No infrastructure is to be installed within the drip line of existing trees.

### 8.4 Access and site control (temporary fencing)

1. All temporary fencing and/or barriers used to secure a park area and protect sensitive zones (i.e. planting beds) will be supplied and installed by the Applicant. Types and locations of barriers, fencing and other fixtures must be shown on the site plan and submitted to the Events and Program Support Section or appropriate land use division for approval.
2. All temporary fencing used on NCC lands should be self supporting. Supporting posts can be utilized in certain areas upon approval by the designated NCC representative. If supporting posts are driven into the ground, the Applicant will be responsible for ANY and ALL damage caused to underground utilities and irrigation systems.
3. Fencing required to control access for the collection of entrance fees may be erected a maximum of **24 hours** prior to the opening of the event and must be removed within **24 hours** after closing (The event opening and closing does not include set-up and take-down periods but is limited to the days open to the public). The Permittee must provide a minimum of **3 metres** of unobstructed entry and exit on at least two opposing sides of the event area. This entry/exit may be divided into two **1.5- metre** passages with dividers denoting the exit and entryway.

## 8.5 Vehicle requirements and restrictions

1. The number of vehicles circulating in parks must be minimized for the following reasons:
  - Parks are green spaces for which the primary attraction is an opportunity to escape from the sounds and sights of the urban landscape. When they become **parking lots** they defeat this role.
  - Any vehicles circulating in a park at any one time, increases the chances of damage to natural and built features and the danger to park users.
2. The NCC will provide a limited number of **vehicular passes** for an event taking place on its land. The number of vehicles on a site at one time will be restricted and will be monitored by the NCC. The number of passes required must be justified in the permit application. It will be the responsibility of the Permittee to have a security guard or other authorized person positioned at the entrance of the park to manage the use of passes and monitor and control the entry and exit of all vehicles to the site. The NCC reserves the right to tow any vehicles (at Permittee's expense) in a park without a pass. The passes will be required for all motorized vehicles used for the delivery, set up and take down. No employee parking is permitted on NCC lands. ALL parking locations must be clearly identified on the event site plan and be approved by the designated NCC representative.
3. Essential vehicles, when accessing the park, are to remain on asphalt pathways or hard surface at all times.
4. In order to minimize damage from oil dropping, the Permittee is required to provide drip pans or blankets for any vehicles which must be parked in the park as part of the event.
5. On parkways, driveways, recreational pathways and trails, service and emergency vehicles are allowed however the NCC must approve the location and number of such vehicles.

## 8.6 Universal accessibility

The Permittee must accommodate people with disabilities at the event by:

- Ensuring that all park entry points during the event are universally accessible;
- Providing easy routes for movement through the site and between attractions (i.e. allowing adequate distance between tent stakes);
- Ensuring that guy wires, ropes, banners, attractions, etc. do not create obstacles on the site's pedestrian routes for people with disabilities.
- Providing universally accessible washroom facilities on site.

## 8.7 Washroom and hand washing facilities

1. For events located on sites where there are no public washroom facilities, the Permittee is responsible for providing an adequate number of well maintained portable washroom and hand washing facilities. A general guideline is that the number of washrooms required is **one washroom per 400 people**. The actual number will depend on the nature of the event, the event site plan and the average length of visit by the public.

2. The Permittee must also provide universally accessible sanitary facilities and ensure that they are located in areas that are easily accessible from a hard surface.

## **8.8 Security**

1. The Permittee is responsible for providing adequate security for the event. Permittees holding events that are advertised to the public must contact the Royal Canadian Mounted Police and Regional, Municipal or Provincial police forces to discuss security concerns and requirements.
2. The Permittee is responsible for providing security for structures or equipment that they erect on the site(s). The NCC does not take responsibility for any damages, theft or vandalism to such structures or equipment.
3. The Permittee is responsible for ensuring that workers have and use proper safety equipment that they abide by provincial labour codes. and
4. For major events, all festival staff and volunteers should be well identified.

## **8.9 Signage**

1. The types, content, locations and installation mechanisms of banners and other forms of temporary signage including wayfinding, event, commercial, sponsorship and advertizing signs must be shown on the site plan and submitted to the designated NCC representative for approval. No pre-event signage (advertising) will be allowed on NCC lands. Signage can
2. All event banners and signage must be freestanding. Fastening onto site fixtures, buildings, vegetation, sculptures and monuments is strictly prohibited.
3. All signage must be presented equally in both of Canada's official languages and be installed according to standards and protocol.

## **8.10 Park Tolerance Zones**

Some NCC sites are divided into tolerance zones to protect the natural and built features of NCC's capital investments during events such as: trees, shrub and floral beds, turf areas, monuments, all site infrastructures and furnishings (i.e. benches, lighting, waste receptacles, electrical outlets, irrigation system...) and special pavement surfaces (i.e. granite, special concrete...). This system of zones is based upon the needs of individual sites. Site specific guidelines are available by contacting the designated NCC representative. These zones must be reflected in the site plan for the event. Compliance with the park zones is required throughout the event set-up, site preparation, conduct of event and dismantling operations (in some instances, the majority of damages occur during this stage of the event). All sensitive zones (i.e. planting beds) will be required to be fenced.

## 8.11 Sale of goods/vendors

1. **Sale of goods:** The sale and display of products, objects and goods is permitted on the condition that such sale or display is an integral and essential part of an event authorized by the Events and Program Support Section or appropriate NCC Division (i.e. craft products at a festival) .
2. **Food vendors:** The consumption and/or sale of food on site is permitted, if such sale is an integral and essential part of an event authorized by the designated NCC representative. Permittees must obtain the necessary licenses and ensure that legal provisions and site safety and environmental standards are observed. They must also comply with Health Canada regulations and applicable provincial, regional and municipal laws and by-laws and regulations.
3. **Alcoholic beverages:** The consumption and/or sale of alcoholic beverages on a site is permitted if approved by the National Capital Commission. The Permittee must obtain the appropriate license(s) for the sale of alcoholic beverages and provide adequate security to maintain law and order on the site. No alcoholic beverages will be served in glass bottles. Only plastic glasses are allowed on NCC sites.
4. The Permittee is responsible for ensuring that all vendors associated with the event adhere to the NCC approved site plan
5. The Permittee must ensure that NO oils, greases and other food wastes spill on park surfaces. be carried off site and disposed of properly and in accordance with applicable regulations. Dumping of greases, oils and other food wastes into manhole outlets or storm drains is strictly prohibited and subject to fines. Wastes which are improperly disposed of will be removed from the park at the permittee's expense.

In order to minimize damage to turf or park hard surfaces, the Permittee must provide DRIP PANS for any vendors operating in the park as part of their event. Performance will be assessed from set-up to take-down of events and the rating will be reflected in the performance guarantee returns.

6. The NCC promotes recycling and encourages Permittees to use "environmentally friendly" products at points of sale.

## 8.12 Electrical equipment and connections

The Permittee will be responsible to ensure that all electrical equipment brought to the site and connected to the NCC distribution panels are in good and safe working order and meets all safety and electrical code requirements. The Permittee will be responsible to repair, replace or remove from the site all faulty equipment. All electrical connections should be safe and to code. Any wire crossing pathways should be safe and covered .

## 8.13 Litter

1. The Permittee is responsible before during and immediately following the event, for removing all litter and debris resulting from the use of the property from the site and from the immediate surrounding areas.

2. The Permittee must provide adequate garbage receptacles to support the number of people in projected attendance. The NCC promotes the reduction and recycling of litter and make available on-site recycling containers for public use.
3. During the event, the Permittee must regularly empty garbage receptacles into a dumpster to be located on site or near by so that site users will find clean garbage receptacles at all times. The location of the dumpster must be identified on the site plan. The large garbage dumpsters must also be emptied on a regular basis so that no garbage overflow occurs at any time.
4. From set-up to take-down of the event, the Permittee is responsible for cleaning, every day and every night, ALL litter and debris resulting from the use of the site. The clean-up performance will be monitored by the NCC on a daily basis. If at any time litter is deemed to have exceeded an acceptable level, the NCC may assign a cleaning crew to take the necessary action to clean the site, and the NCC will retain funds from the performance guarantee to cover the cost

## **8.14 Bicycle parking**

Since bicycling is not permitted in urban parks during events, it is recommended that the Permittee provide additional secure bicycle parking and bicycle racks at the entrance of the park to accommodate members of the public attending the event.

## **8.15 Animals**

1. Details of events involving animals as part of the events program must be provided to the designated NCC representative. Based on the role and use of animals during an event, there may be an approval required by the appropriate humane society prior to the event.
2. Permitted animals must be kept under control at all times, either on leashes or in a pen.
3. Animal feces must be removed and properly disposed of regularly during the event  
(Refer to screening process list in appendix III)
4. Event attendees are not allowed to bring animals on site.

## **9. ON-SITE LIAISON**

The Permittee must have a designated representative on site with authority during the set up, operation and dismantling of the event to liaise with the NCC representative and must conform with on site compliance. The name of the event representative must be provided to the NCC representative.

The designated representative must provide

- Business phone number
- Cell phone number
- Fax phone number
- Emergency phone number
- E-mail adress

## 10. WINTER USE

Winter use is a relatively new phenomena which poses some challenges. While the natural components of the parks are dormant during the winter there is still the risk of damage from freeze/thawing of natural surfaces. The following guidelines provide additional direction for winter use.

1. The type and location of equipment and infrastructure to be brought on site, including the installation methods, must be reflected in the event site plan and be approved by the Event and Program Support Section.
2. Pedestrian and vehicular traffic on grass areas should be minimized.
3. When grass areas are used as the location for an installation (ex. ice or snow sculpture) **six (6) inches** of compacted snow must be left on the ground surface using a ski-dozer or similar type of equipment.
4. Hard surfaces must be flagged before the winter season for clearing purposes.
5. The use of salt in the park is not allowed while sand is permitted but must be used in moderation.
6. Protective measures must be increased for both natural (shrubs and trees) and built (benches, light standards, etc.) infrastructure. All shrub and floral beds and displays must be protected with temporary snow fence for the duration of the event.
7. The snow blanket in the park should be left undisturbed wherever possible. The snow should be pushed back into place when practical, after an event is completed.
8. Only clean snow must be imported for use on site or alternatively, artificial snow made on site.
9. There is limited use of utilities and infrastructures within the NCC lands from Thanksgiving weekend in October to March 31, annually (i.e. water is not available during the winter). For more information, please consult the designated NCC representative.
10. It is essential that the NCC liaison or other authorized persons meet on site the day of snow removal operations, prior to beginning work, to direct and monitor operations and clearly inform operators of restrictions and practices related to plowing operations in NCC lands.
11. Lighting within the trees will not be permitted, with the exception of those installed as part of NCC's Programs (i.e. Christmas Lights Across Canada Program).