

Special Events Rescheduling Policy in Response to COVID-19 Restrictions

Rescheduling Special Events:

This policy will apply to events permitted by the Recreation and Parks Office of Special Events while the Governor's Executive Order on Mass Gatherings relating to the COVID-19 pandemic (Order) is in effect. Following expiration of the Order, the Director of Recreation and Parks, Police Chief, Fire Chief, Health Commissioner or their designee must also determine the event does not pose a serious threat to public health, safety or welfare.

General Information

- Dates for returning events are tentatively held by the Office of Special Events one year in advance. Applicants must complete the first page of the online Event Application and receive confirmation of location availability from the Office of Special Events to have a valid reservation.
- Applicants meeting all previous permit requirements will be issued an Event Permit allowing the event to commence as planned once the Order and all applicable Federal, State or Local restrictions expire.
- Applications for Mass Gatherings of 50 or more, which previously qualified for an Event Permit, may assume their event can occur on the date(s) confirmed by the Office of Special Events, once the Order and other Federal, State and Local restrictions expire.
- During the Order, the Office of Special Events will continue to process Event Applications and make contact with all affected applicants to determine their desire to proceed, cancel or reschedule an event.
- Recreation and Parks (CRPD) refund policy established in connection with COVID-19 will supersede all other department refund policies until further notice. Applicants selecting to cancel an event that was previously scheduled for the period set forth in the refund policy will receive a refund of all fees paid to the Office of Special Events for the cancelled event.
- The preferred method of communicating with City department representatives, affected properties and planning teams is by phone or email.
- The Office of Special Events will make all necessary resource materials available online and communicate major updates and changes to those with pending applications.
- Application processes which are in opposition to guidelines provided by Federal, State and Local agencies will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis.
- Future Event Permits may be subject to additional public health and safety restrictions relating to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- Events not impacted by the Order will not be asked by the City to cancel and/or reschedule in order to accommodate a Signature Event.
- All permitted events and rentals that are scheduled to take place during the Order will be cancelled with the exception of church service rentals. Church services will have the option to postpone, unless they become included in the Order.



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Event Permits

- Applicants having an event which is scheduled to take place after April 3, 2020 should continue to follow the timeline for the permit they are seeking (see below). Timelines are established to allow City department processing time, coordination of resources, labor and compliance with non-City permit guidelines such as the State's Temporary Liquor Permit. Failure to follow application guidelines may affect the City's ability to process permits. No late fees will be charged for events rescheduled due to COVID-19 or the Order.

Application timelines

- Special Event Permit: 60 days
- Race Permit: 60 days
- Block Party Permit: 30 days
- Marine Event Permit: 30 days

Cancellations/Refunds

- All events and rentals that take place between March 13, 2020 and April 3, 2020 will be cancelled and refunded, or credited towards future use if purchaser requests a cancellation.
- All events and rentals scheduled to take place between April 4, 2020 and the end of the Order will be refunded or credited towards future use if purchaser requests a cancellation.
- Credits are non-transferrable and may only be applied once within the calendar year.

Rescheduling

- Availability is not guaranteed. Priority will be given to events in good standing with the City as follows:
 - Signature Events will be given preference on available dates in chronological order. Event scope must be appropriate for the venue.
 - Event Permits revoked due to the Order will be given preference on available dates in chronological order.
 - All other events will be given preference on available dates in chronological order.
 - Efforts will be made to reschedule events at their original location. Once a date has been offered, applicants will be given 2 business days to confirm a new reservation.

Signature Event - "A large-scale event which has a substantial impact to City property and requires the support of most City Departments. It must be an annual event that has been held for a minimum of 5 consecutive years. The event must demonstrate a large economic impact to Columbus, community significance, citywide support and promotion of Columbus. Signature event classification will be determined by CRPD Staff."





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Revocation of Event Permits

- Permits issued by the Office of Special Events for mass gatherings prior to commencement of the Governor's Executive Order (3/9/2020), will be revoked by the Office of Special Events if the event is scheduled to take place during the Order. At the time the permit is revoked, the event coordinator may request a credit or a full refund. If choosing to reschedule, the event coordinator will be allowed to revise the Event Application on file. Prior to applying, applicants should consult the Office of Special Events on availability.

