



# Special Event Planning Guide

City of Bristol, Virginia

Office of Special Events  
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# Special Event Planning Guide

The Office of Special Events has created this Special Event Planning Guide to assist with the event permitting process.

The Special Event permitting process is managed by the Office of Special Events and supported by representatives from relevant City Departments and the City Manager.

## **Role of the Office of Special Events**

The Office of Special Events is responsible for processing applications and reviewing event requests for compliance with City Code and Special Event policies. The Office of Special Events will coordinate City services for events and serve as liaison between event organizers, City departments, and partner agencies.

## **Role of the Event Organizer**

Event organizers must submit all required items by the published deadlines. It is the organizer's responsibility to ensure compliance with the conditions of the Special Event Permit. Event organizers should communicate with the Office of Special Events before, during, and after the event to ensure a smooth permitting process and a successful event.

## Applying for a Permit

### **Who needs a special events permit?**

A Special Event Permit is required for events that utilize public spaces, such as streets, sidewalks, public parks, plazas, or other public property. Events contained to private property do not require a Special Event Permit.

### **How to apply**

Submit a Special Event Permit Application using the online [Special Event Permit Application](#) form. Applying for an event does not guarantee that your event will be approved.

Submit appropriate application fee. Application fees are non-refundable.

Staff will review the application, then contact event organizers with instructions on how to proceed. Some responses given on the application will lead to the need for additional information and/or secondary permit applications.

### **Please note:**

If your event will also take place in or involve the City of Bristol, Tennessee, additional paperwork must be submitted to them. Please contact 423-764-3463.

## Permit Process

### Overview

During the permit application process, the Office of Special Events will coordinate with relevant City departments and partner agencies to assess the needs for your event. We will notify you if additional information, forms, licenses, etc. are required.

#### Step 1) Submit Special Event Permit Application.

- Submit application online [www.bristolva.org](http://www.bristolva.org)
- Email application to [debi.denney@bristolva.org](mailto:debi.denney@bristolva.org)
- Bring application to City Hall located at 300 Lee Street, Bristol, VA.

#### Step 2) Event Location and date are tentatively reserved.

#### Step 3) Permit Application Review.

- The Special Events Coordinator will distribute completed applications to any City of Bristol, Virginia, departments which may be impacted by your event.
- All City departments adhere to City of Bristol, Virginia, policies and code when reviewing applications.
- City departments will consider budget constraints when reviewing applications.
- City departments will consider personnel constraints when reviewing applications.
- Additional information may be requested during the reviewing of applications.

#### Step 4) Make Adjustments to Event Plans as Needed.

#### Step 5) Permit Approval/Denial Notification.

- The Office of Special Events will typically act on permit applications within 10 business days of receipt of all required information.
- Approval notification may occur via email or phone call.
- Conditions may be placed upon some permit approvals. Notification of conditions to be met will be provided in writing via email.
- Denial notifications will occur in writing via email or United States Postal Service.

## Deadlines and Fees

An application is not considered complete until both the completed application and the non-refundable application fee have been received. Permit fees are collected upon approval of the event.

## Permit Fee Schedule

Event Type	Application Deadline	Permit Fee
Cumberland Square Park Community Event – Free to Public	30 Days	\$70
Cumberland Square Park General Event – Ticketed	30 Days	\$120
Special Event in Bristol, VA	90 Days	N/A

In addition to permit fees, you may be assessed charges for resources provided for your event by City departments or divisions. You may also be responsible for charges assessed by third parties.

## Miscellaneous Fee Schedule

Expenses	Cost	Agency
Special Beverage Service Application	\$50	City of Bristol, Virginia – Community Development and Planning
Virginia ABC Banquet License	Varies	Virginia Alcoholic Beverage Control Authority
Liability Insurance	Varies	Event Organizer’s Insurance Provider
Fencing	\$4,500	City of Bristol, Virginia – Public Works

## Refund / Cancellation Information

Permit fees are collected upon an event’s approval and are refundable up to 15 days prior to the event. There is no refund of permit fees if an event is cancelled within 15 days of the event date. Permit fees may be transferrable to a future event at the discretion of the Office of Special Events.

## Reservations

### New Events

Dates and locations are reserved on a first-come, first-served basis. Dates will be tentatively reserved upon receipt of the Special Event Permit Application. Please contact the Special Events Coordinator at 276-967-1287 to ensure that your preferred date and location are available.

### Annual Events

Organizers in satisfactory standing with the Office of Special Events are invited to reserve the same annual date. The request must be submitted in writing via email to [debi.denney@bristolva.org](mailto:debi.denney@bristolva.org) within four weeks after the current year's event.

## Event Infrastructures

### Street Closures

The temporary closure of City streets is coordinated through the Office of Special Events and managed by the City of Bristol, Virginia, Public Works and Police Departments.

A street closure request application must be submitted ninety (90) days prior to the event. Street Closure policies must be followed.

The temporary closure of City streets must be approved by the Bristol, Virginia, City Council.

### Fencing

If your event requires an enclosed footprint, the City of Bristol, Virginia, can provide full-service fence rental. A rental agreement and payment of additional fees are required.

### Stages

There is a stage located in Cumberland Square Park. Basic overhead lights and electricity are included in the park rental fee. Any sound and/or stage lighting services needed are the responsibility of the event organizer.

Stages needed elsewhere in the City are the responsibility of the event organizer.

### Waste Management Plan

Event spaces must be cleaned during and following each event. Event organizers should have a plan to manage waste material generated during the event.

Event organizers are responsible for ensuring that the event space is clean and all waste materials are placed in the receptacles provided at the conclusion of the event.

### **Restroom Facilities**

Event organizers must provide adequate restroom facilities for participants and service providers. Organizers can meet this requirement by renting portable toilets from a third-party provider.

### **Food Service**

If you plan to sell, serve, or give away food products, including water or other beverages, at a public event, certain public safety features must be provided such as hand-washing stations and portable toilets.

All food vendors must have a current City of Bristol, Virginia, Business License and a local health department permit.

### **Non-Food Vendors**

All non-food vendors must have a current City of Bristol, Virginia, Business License.

#### Business License Contact

Commissioner of Revenue

Phone: 276-645-7316

#### Health Department Contact

Stephen Turner

Phone: 276-642-7335

It is the responsibility of event vendors to obtain any and all required permits.

## **Alcohol**

### **Overview**

If your event involves the possession or consumption of alcoholic beverages on public property, regardless of whether it is being sold or given away, you must submit a Special Beverage Service Application. Having alcohol at your event may result in additional insurance and security requirements. These requirements will be as determined by your insurance provider.

### **Virginia ABC Permit Requirements**

Organizers of any event which involves alcohol in any capacity, to include the sale of alcohol as well as providing complimentary alcohol, must obtain an appropriate license from the Virginia Alcoholic Beverage Control Authority.

You must present the completed and approved City of Bristol, Virginia, Special Beverage Services Application when applying at the regional Virginia ABC office.

#### Virginia ABC Regional Office

102 Abingdon Place

Abingdon, VA 24211

276-676-5502

## Insurance Requirements

Event organizers will be responsible for any and all damages caused by their organization, volunteers, employees, participants, and/or spectators.

### **Certificate of Liability Insurance – Organizer**

Organizers of events taking place on public property are required to secure an insurance policy for the event. The policy must name the City of Bristol, Virginia, as additional insured. Event organizers shall purchase and maintain this insurance providing coverage for the event with requirements as listed below:

### **Commercial General Liability**

#### Minimum Limits:

Each Occurrence: \$1,000,000

Damage to Rented Premises: \$1,000,000

Medical Expenses: \$5,000

Personal & Advertising Injury: \$1,000,000

General Aggregate: \$2,000,000

Products Completed Ops/Agg: \$1,000,000

If the event includes alcohol and/or fireworks, additional coverage is also required.

### **Liquor Liability**

Minimum limits for this coverage shall be \$1,000,000.

### **Fireworks Liability**

Minimum limits for this coverage shall be \$5,000,000.

### **Third Party Insurance – Vendors, Contractors, etc.**

Event organizers should ensure that contractors providing goods or services for the event maintain appropriate insurance coverage.

## City of Bristol, Virginia Venues

### **Cumberland Square Park**

Located at 200 Lee Street, Bristol, Virginia, in the heart of downtown, Cumberland Square Park includes a Music Pavilion, Picnic Shelter, Amphitheater, Veteran's War Memorial, and an Exhibition Vietnam-Era AH-1 Cobra Aircraft.

### **Fred Hayes Park**

Located at 309 Spencer Street, Bristol, Virginia, Fred Hayes Park is a small fenced park with a pavilion.

To hold an event in these parks, contact the Office of Special Events: 276-967-1287.

## **Other Parks and Facilities**

Belle Meadows

Breedlove-Charles Park

Dr. W.A. Johnson Park

Mumpower Park

Suncrest Park

Portsmouth Street Park

Moore Street Park

Jim Slagle Park

Westfield Park

Jackson Park

Pearl Street Park

Sugar Hollow Park

For more information regarding these facilities, contact: Bristol, Virginia, Parks and Recreation at 276-645-7377.