

COVID-19

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City Artist Corps Grants

Permitting Agencies

Street Activities

SAPO/DOT

Street Activity Permit Office and NYC DOT

For performances/events on the street that are considered street performances/busking, etc you do not generally need a permit unless you are using amplified sound. Anything happening in a park needs a Special Event Permit from Parks Dept (more info below.)

Street performers usually do not need a permit. However, a permit is required if you:

- Use a sound device such as a loudspeaker, megaphone, or stereo
- Perform in or next to a park

You can complete an application for a Sound Device Permit during business hours at your [local police precinct](#). There is a \$45 fee. Sound permit application: http://www.nycgovparks.org/sub_permits_and_applications/images_and_pdfs/NYPD_Sound_permit_application.pdf

You can apply for a Department of Parks and Recreation (DPR) Special Events Permit to perform in or next to a public park. There is a \$25 fee. To learn how to apply for a DPR permit, go to the [Park Event Permit](#) page.

NYC Parks Dept

Special events permits-<https://nyceventpermits.nyc.gov/parks/Login.aspx?ReturnUrl=%2fparks>

\$25 permit fee

No permits will be granted for applications with an expected attendance of more than 200 people at any one time. Furthermore, If your event requires any of the below, your permit application will be denied.

- Applicant seeks a location that NYC Parks determines would prevent members of the public from the reasonable simultaneous use of all or part of the park for recreational purposes; or
- Applicant requires the authorization of vehicles to be driven in a park; or
- Applicant is seeking use of a sound device permit when the event would include a stage or video screens.

Any events that are deemed eligible will also be required to submit a signed copy of the [Safety Plan Affirmation \[PDF\]](#), confirming they will institute the included measures to reduce the risk of transmission of COVID-19 at the event site.

If an artist is doing a larger event on the street with a planned audience they will need a permit:

[Open Culture Permits](#)

Open Culture is a new permit type available from the Mayor's Street Activity Permit Office allowing for ticketed performances. Arts and cultural institutions, as well as entertainment venues, will have the opportunity to secure a permit for socially distanced performances at almost 200 street locations throughout all five boroughs. Applications will be considered on a first-come, first-serve basis. Applications open on March 1st at 12pm and the program will run through October 31, 2021.

To apply for an Open Culture event, [click here](#).

- Applicants must either be:
 - Sponsored by a Cultural Organization that is either a CIG or a CDF program
 - Sponsored by a Cultural Venue as defined by guidelines below
 - OR an individual must have received funding from a Borough Arts Council in 2019 or 2020
- Application Fee: \$20 (non-refundable)
- Permit Fee: none
- Application Deadline: 15 days prior to event date
- Application Processing Time: Five business days
- Frequency: An applicant may apply for up to four events per location per month. Events may be on consecutive days. Applicants must submit one application per location for each month.
- Locations: Open Culture locations are determined by DOT and permitted by SAPO on a first-come first-served basis with one event per block/location.

The applicant or sponsor must submit at least one of the following types of documentation to validate their eligibility:

- Documentation indicating status as a member of DCLA Cultural Institutions Group (CIG); or
- DCLA Cultural Development Fund (CDF) Grant Award Letter; or
- DCLA Cultural Development Fund (CDF) Notification letter; or
- Documentation establishing that the applicant or sponsor received funding from a Borough Arts Council in 2019 or 2020; or
- Applicants and sponsors that believe they are eligible for DCLA CDF Funding, but have not applied previously must submit:
 - 501C3 Determination
 - Fiscal 2019 IRS form 990 (with a NYC address)
 - Select background materials documenting the 2-year track record of cultural activity (fliers, postcards, programs, photos, press, etc.)

Applicants can also apply if sponsored by a cultural venue as defined:

- A cultural venue is "an entertainment facility in the city of New York intended or designed to be used for a performance in front of a live audience."

Examples:

- A theater, music venue, comedy club, or similar venue that has regular live performances could qualify.
- A residence that hosts performances (e.g., poetry readings) or a film production facility that is used to film shows before a live studio audience would not qualify.

The applicant or sponsor will be required to submit at least one of the following types of documentation to validate their eligibility:

- Applicable to venues with a State Liquor Authority (SLA) license: Copy of SLA license or Community Board stipulations showing that the "method of operation" allows for live music, performance or entertainment (e.g., live music, DJs, comedy, theater, or other performances); or
- Documents showing that applicant's entertainment facility is regularly used for live performances, such as:
 - a website showing at least three ticketed performances at the facility from 2019 to 2020; or
 - advertisements for at least three performances at the facility from 2019 to 2020 (e.g., in newspapers, on social media); or
 - playbills or programs from at least three performances at the facility from 2019 to 2020; or
 - press clippings from at least three performances at the facility from 2019 to 2020; or
 - other documentation in SAPO's discretion that the facility is intended or designed to be used for performance in front of a live audience.

TIMEFRAME

- Permits are for a single month of events. There is a maximum of 4 event days per month for each applicant or sponsor.
- Permits are limited to a duration of 12 hours including set up and breakdown of all event elements.
- For events on consecutive days, all event elements must be removed overnight, and the street must be re-opened.
- Additional restrictions on event duration and sound may be set based on location and in consultation with other agencies.

EVENT GUIDELINES

COVID-19:

- An event or performance must comply with any applicable requirements on outdoor cultural events and gatherings set by applicable federal, state, or New York City law or guidelines or other directive from the governor or any government agency, including the [NYS DOH Interim Guidance for Small and Medium Scale Performing Arts and Entertainment During the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency](#). For the purposes of the NYS DOH Interim Guidance, the Open Culture permittee is the "Responsible Party" and is responsible for complying with the NYS DOH Interim Guidance.
- All applicants are required to submit a [COVID-19 Safety Affirmation Plan](#).
- Non-essential gathering limits are subject to change based on State and City law or guidelines, and events are subject to capacity limits and cancellation based on changes in law or guidelines.

ACCESSIBILITY:

- All institutions and venues shall adhere to all local, state and federal requirements relating to accessibility for people with disabilities.

LOCATION:

- Only those locations designated for use by the Open Culture Program are available. Those locations are listed on SAPO's website [here](#). Permittees utilizing a location with existing restaurants participating in the DOT Open Restaurants program must set up at least 15 feet away from an outdoor dining enclosure.

EMERGENCY AND PEDESTRIAN ACCESS:

- 15-foot emergency lane must be provided at all times with no obstruction by any event elements.
- 5-foot pedestrian egress must be provided at all times on sidewalks.
- Event elements cannot be placed on the sidewalks.

STREET CLOSURE AND SECURITY:

- Security and closure of the street is the responsibility of the permittee.
- Permittees must obtain No Parking signs from the local NYPD precinct in advance of the event.

SANITATION:

- Permittees are responsible for cleanup of the event space. All trash must be bagged and removed promptly after the event ends.

SOUND:

- Any device used to amplify sound requires a Sound Device Permit from the NYPD.
- Permittees seeking to utilize amplified sound must apply for a Sound Device Permit from the local NYPD precinct where the event is taking place.
- Additional restrictions on sound may apply based on location including near schools, courthouses, hospitals and houses of worship. Please see the [NYPD Sound Device application](#) for more information and contact the local [NYPD Precinct](#). Sound permit application: http://www.nycgovparks.org/sub_permits_and_applications/images_and_pdfs/NYPD_Sound_permit_application.pdf

TEMPORARY FENCING AND ENCLOSURES:

- Permittees may use temporary fencing, barricades, or other delineators to enclose the event and restrict access to ticketholders, however capacity is restricted based on the guidelines below.
- Barriers or fencing may not prevent members of the public from viewing the event from outside the designated event space.
- Barricades provided by the NYPD are not guaranteed but applicants can request them from their local precinct and will be provided if available.

FILMING:

- Permittees may film or record the event without the need for a film permit.

QUEING AND PRODUCTION VEHICLE PARKING:

- Permittees must utilize the block assigned and the designated Open Culture location for any queuing lines or production vehicle parking. Additional locations needed for these activities outside of the assigned Open Culture street will require a separate SAPO Production Permit application which carries additional fees and an additional approval process.

TICKETING AND DONATIONS:

- Permittees may sell tickets or collect donations without the need for additional permits.

INSURANCE REQUIREMENTS:

- Commercial general liability insurance with a minimum of \$1 million per occurrence naming the applicant as insured.
- Additional Insured: The City of New York, including its officials and employees, must be covered as additional insured.
- Certificate Holder: The certificate holder should be listed as "City of New York c/o Street Activity Permit Office, 253 Broadway, New York, NY 10007."
- Insurance Hardship Waiver: applicants that cannot afford insurance can include a letter addressed to the SAPO Director seeking a hardship waiver. This letter should include a statement outlining that the cost of insurance would exceed 25% of the anticipated revenue of the event.
- If your Open Culture location falls within a Business Improvement District(BID), please also list the BID as additional insured on an insurance certificate you provide. Please see this [list for the locations](#) where this applies and the legal name and address to include for each BID. If you are applying for an Insurance Hardship Waiver, you do not need to provide this.

SITE PLAN AND RUNS OF SHOW:

- Applicants must submit a site plan and run of show which must include:
 - Site plan must include:
 - 15 ft emergency lane
 - All elements being placed on the street clearly labeled
 - Fire hydrants
 - Run of show must include:
 - Set up and break down times
 - All programming with names of artists, musicians, guests
 - Any other scheduled activities
- Please click the following links for the [Site Plan Template](#), a [Sample Site Plan](#), the [Run of Show Template](#), and a [Sample Run of Show](#). Please note, using the templates we provided is not mandatory.

INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY:

- Permittee must own or obtain the necessary intellectual property rights to publicly perform material (e.g., a song, a play). For example, to perform "New York New York" the permittee must obtain a license from BMI. (For more information about music licenses, see <https://repertoire.bmi.com>; <https://www.ascap.com/repertory#>.)

PROHIBITED ELEMENTS:

- The event is limited to 500 people pursuant to State guidelines.
- Unreasonable noise as defined by the [NYC Noise Code 24-218](#)
- Stages exceeding 120ft sq and over 2 feet in height.
- Structures, props and trusses exceeding 10 feet in height
- Tents or canopy exceeding 400 gross sq feet
- Truck/trailer-mounted generators or any generator equal to or greater than 40 kw output
- Open Flames or Fires
- Use or storage of flammable/ combustible gas or liquids
- Generator with greater than 2.5 gallons of gasoline or 10 gallons of diesel capacity
- Pole taps
- Sales and distribution of food (including packaged food) and beverages (including alcohol)
- Sales of goods and services (other than tickets/donations)
- No live animals are to be used as part of the event
- Horse drawn carriages
- Inflatable or erected rides (including bounce houses and similar amusement devices)
- Carnival games and Games of Chance
- Hydrant taps
- Special Effects, pyrotechnics and/or fireworks (including fire performers, sparklers, sparktacular units, confetti, air cannons etc.)
- Over-dimensional vehicles as defined by [DOT](#)
- Cranes
- Elements or activities that would place an excessive burden on City resources and personnel
- Element or activities that would unreasonable danger to the health or safety of the applicant, event participants or other members of the public or cause damage to public or private property

ENFORCEMENT:

- Applicants are required to adhere to the guidelines above and conditions set on the permit, in addition to any applicable laws or rules, including the [NYS DOH Interim Guidance for Small and Medium Scale Performing Arts and Entertainment During the COVID-19 Public Health Emergency](#).
- Failure to do so may result in the denial of future SAPO permit applications or other penalties.

If an artist needs to completely or partially close a street:

DOT Open Streets:

- If you want to block off a section of a street for pedestrian access and special activities that support local businesses and cultural activities. DOT has two categories-

1. Temporary Limited Local Access (some local vehicle access)
2. Temporary Full Closure (no local vehicle access)

- Mix of both- must contact NYC DOT at openstreets@dot.nyc.gov before selecting this option
- Programs are permitted via a SAPO permit
- Links:
 - <https://www1.nyc.gov/html/dot/html/pedestrians/openstreets.shtml>
 - Application: <https://survey123.arcgis.com/share/d503aa6f198f434d8363f70e657a6a2e>

Other possible outdoor venue permit information:

MTA

Has a special MUSIC program but artists don't have to be part of the MUSIC program to perform in the subway system

- No amplified music without a permit
- Must not impede transit activities, including access to the trains and stations and the free movement of passengers.

The Music Under New York (MUSIC) program coordinates special events throughout the Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) transit system. MUSIC selects performers by audition. Learn how to apply and audition for the MUSIC program.

Agency: Metropolitan Transportation Authority
 Division: Music Under New York
 Phone Number: (212) 878-4678
 Business Hours: Monday - Friday: 10 AM - 4 PM

Staten Island Ferry

- You need a permit for instrumental, singing, or dancing performances at Staten Island Ferry terminals.
- You can audition with the Metropolitan Transportation Authority (MTA) Music Under New York (MUSIC) program (see above). If you are approved, the Department of Transportation will issue you a permit.
- Permits aren't issued for any activity on ferry boats.